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RIVER ISLAND

#IMWEARINGRI   

Contents

APRIL 2015



COVER STAR

118
*Cameron
Diaz*

HAS FOUND
HER HAPPY
PLACE

ON THE COVER

68 'I Lived Out Of A Suitcase' Five Cosmo readers on how they saved to buy their first homes

70 Love Your Body Natasha Devon explores what 'beauty' means around the world

82 Win At Work Karren Brady's Career Clinic is open for business. Prepare to be inspired

118 382 Shoes That Scream Buy Me! Bright heels, block heels, pastels, flats, stripes and tassels – meet the season's most stylish shoes!

182 4 Things All Confident Women Do In Bed Leave your insecurities at the door and have your best sex ever



182

"What a large pole you have..."



90

Life's just
beachy

FASHION

21 How Do I Wear... Neoprene Allow Cosmo's fashion team to show you how to rock this sports-lux fabric

26 Lust Haves Cuddly accessories to go wild for

90 Love Child Hippy fringing and floaty fabrics are having a fashion moment. Peace out

100 Girl On A Mission ... to look seriously stylish in monochrome

108 Plain Sailing Hit the high seas in clashing prints for nautical style with an S/S15 twist

125 Catwalk To Curvy Laura Puddy makes the hottest new-season trends work for your body

127 Catwalk To Cosmo

Get your head in the game with these stylish sporty picks #nosweat

131 Top 10 Shirts Button up in a cool button-down



118

Shoe
heaven
awaits...



Inside MEN'S MINDS

76 Kip Gamblin *Neighbours* star Kip wearing nothing but his surfboard? G'day, mate!



Celebrities

28 Date Night With Andy Jordan Fancy a country getaway with the *Made In Chelsea* charmer?

56 Am I Weird For Keeping His Toothbrush? Cosmo columnist Jameela Jamil opens up about letting go of love ↗



132Golden eyes
shine bright

Careers & CONFIDENCE

19 Be That Girl Telly chef Rachel Khoo shares her secrets to achieving culinary-career success

37 So You Think You Want My Job?

This woman's average working day is spent tasting and making chocolate. Yep, that really *is* a job – here's how to get it

**140**Scents to calm
your senses

Beauty

24 Gothic Berry Lips Embrace your dark side and vamp it up with a statement pout

132 Wild At Heart Take inspiration from bold-and-bright colours of nature with these brave new-season makeup looks

140 Scented Little Helpers Can a perfume change your life? We investigate...

147 Getting Ready With Rita Ora When

it comes to partying, *This Is How She Does It*...

149 Excess Baggage Undereyes giving away your love of late nights? Check out these expert secrets to perma-perky peepers

151 Love, Demi Actress and singer Demi Lovato talks body confidence (and lippy)

155 Diary Of A Hair Chameleon When it comes to her locks, Amy Swales can't stick to one look. But does she need a cure?

156 Beauty Lab Calling all blondes! These shampoos will leave your hair gleaming

161 Hot Right Now The genius new products on our wish list this month



Sex etc.

44 Sex And The Single Guy Tom's got baggage – but that's OK

46 Sex And The Single Girl Meet our shiny new columnist Lauren!

181 Sex Etc How his job title can reveal whether he wants to commit

186 Sex Therapy Real talk with Rachel

187 More Vanilla Sex Please! Bin the handcuffs, I'll take missionary any day

HEALTH and BODY

171 Health Etc How your smartphone could make you healthier

173 My Body's Amazing Because... Zara on overcoming tragedy and learning to love her body

174 Face The Smear And Do It Anyway Cosmo staffer Sophie takes this vital health test

177 Soup It Up Lunch need never be boring with these superfood extras

178 Get Fitter Together Work out

with your other half

179 Bye-Bye Body Hang-Ups Linda tackles bad breath

188 Ask Irma Advice you can trust

**173**
Zara's proud
of her body

80 Your Boss Said What?!

Somebody call HR...

162 Cosmo's Guide To The Big Weekend

Kick back, we've got your Easter weekend plans sorted (just add chocolate)

59Anaïs and
Samantha,
reunited

...and everything else

8 On The Cover Steal Cam's style

15 From The Editor

17 Youniverse Have your say

189 5 Reasons To Put Tokyo On Your Bucket List It's worth the trip for the cat cafes alone!

191 Design Doubles Give your home a retro vibe on any budget

194 Cosmostrology Horoscopes

202 10 Things You think when your best friend gets hitched

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On the
COVER



CAMERON DIAZ

We're loving Cam's sporty look. Here's how to steal it!

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Fashion director Aya Kanai

Hair Chris McMillan for Living Proof at Solo Artists

Makeup Genevieve for Lancôme

Nails April Foreman at the Wall Group, using Chanel

Set Design Jesse Nemeth at BA Reps

Production Michelle Hynek for First Shot Productions

Bodysuit Lisa Marie Fernandez

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BY LUCY PARTINGTON AND KATIE SAXON

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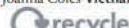
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007TM

FOR WOMEN



THE NEW
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FRAGRANCE



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A blurry, low-light photograph of a city street at dusk or night. The scene is filled with streaks of light from moving vehicles, creating a sense of motion. In the background, there are buildings, palm trees, and a bridge. The overall atmosphere is hazy and atmospheric.

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EVERY BODY'S A WINNER

When I asked Natasha Devon, our queen of all things body confidence, to look at beauty around the world (see p70), I was shocked at the difference in opinions. "In my experience, if you're having a self-esteem crisis, one of the easiest ways to make yourself feel better is to talk to people from different countries and cultures," Natasha told me. "After all, it's statistically likely your body type is one that women are aspiring to somewhere in the world."

One of my favourite stories that Natasha told me was from a girl called Katy Jane, who lived in Paris for a year and noticed how tiny and trim the women were. "Going to work was like being in a fashion show of designer labels, perfect hair and nails," Katy

Jane noted. "The women watched their weight all the time." How different from her life now, working as a cowgirl in Wyoming, USA. "Here, a 'perfect' woman is



'handy,' she said. "She knows her way around all aspects of ranch life, can ride, rope, weld, fix fences. I've actually had more and more compliments, because I'm much happier in jeans, very little makeup and usually covered in horseshit!"

Natasha summed it up well: "I thought about what it means to be the 'perfect' woman and concluded: there is no such thing."

Too true – all the more reason to celebrate who you are.

PS Don't miss a glimpse behind the scenes of this month's *My Body's Amazing* shoot (see p173). Zara appears on the *Cosmo Body Show* (Tuesday, 10 March at 10PM on FAB TV, Sky Channel 254). "I've been reading *Cosmo* for a long time, and love the body-confidence section," Zara said. "I wanted to inspire other people in the same way that it has inspired me."

Louise

Louise Court (Editor-in-Chief)



Follow Louise @LouiseCosmoEd

#HUMBLEBRAG

We don't mean to boast, but this issue is brought to you by a team of award-winners...

- Best Online Beauty Journalist, Johnson & Johnson Skincare Journalism Awards, 2015 – Bridget March
- Best Beauty Team, Johnson & Johnson Skincare Journalism Awards, 2015
- Editor of the Year (monthly magazines), BSME Awards, 2014 – Louise Court
- Digital Editorial Individual, AOP Digital Publishing Awards, 2014 – Kate Lucey
- Best Art Team, BSME Rising Stars, 2014

- Best Picture Editor, BSME Rising Stars 2014 – Joan Tinney
- Beat Beacon Award, 2014 – For *Cosmo's* work on raising awareness of eating disorders
- Best Column, UK Dating Awards 2014 – Sex & The Single Guy, Tom Craine
- Best Magazine for Dating Advice, UK Dating Awards, 2014
- Campaign of the Year, BSME Awards 2013 – Coppafeel! Breast Cancer Awareness campaign



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THE
SMART GIRL'S
GUIDE TO
OWNING IT THIS
MONTH

TV's coolest cookery queen

Chef, writer, illustrator and broadcaster Rachel Khoo, 34, is no stranger to risking everything to achieve her dreams. Aged 25, she ditched her well-paid PR job in London to study patisserie at Le Cordon Bleu culinary school in Paris – something she'd long dreamt of doing: "I was bored, and knew if I didn't do something now, I never would." Knowing nobody in Paris, Rachel grafted hard for three years, working two jobs to fund her course and cramming in French lessons whenever she could.

"It wasn't easy; part of me was pretty terrified," she admits. "I knew I'd miss my family and friends, but there was so much to gain from going. It's good to get out of your comfort zone." Rachel used her job in a cafe as an opportunity to network with chefs and food writers. It worked: cookbook author Marc Grossman agreed to let her test recipes for him, and she ended up securing her own book deal as a result (in French, no less – not bad for someone who'd not previously spoken it!).

Rachel has since written two more best-selling cookbooks as well as opening a pop-up restaurant in her teeny kitchen, which led to a BBC2 cookery show, *The Little Paris Kitchen*. The secret of her success? Hard work, persistence and pitching in with everything. "I knocked on so many doors, and sent endless letters to make every tiny bit of progress," she says. "I made it my mission to become a master of everything – from computer coding and finance to press and marketing. The biggest piece of advice I can give to other women struggling to get ahead is speak up if you don't understand something, and never be afraid of looking foolish. Being informed is our route to power."

• **Rachel Khoo's Kitchen Notebook (£20, Michael Joseph) is out now**



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Katie Holmes

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How DO I wear



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Neoprene

It's the must-have fashion fabric of the moment. But don't be scared - think less scuba instructor and more sports luxe



HERMÈS



Jazzy jackets

A structured, statement jacket in neoprene updates all your classics. Stick to neutral colours to maximise wearability.

Fashion Coordinator Holly Coopey wears: Jacket, £65, Asos. Top, £108, Stylestalker. Trousers, £75, Coast. Shoes, £24.99, New Look. Jewellery, Holly's own

Follow Holly @HollyCooop



MARC BY MARC JACOBS

Fit and flare

Party dresses in this thick fabric are super-supportive, so pick one that really fits your bust and waist to avoid bagginess or gaping.

Fashion Assistant Katie Saxon wears: Dress, £230, Skeena. S. Shoes, £45, Schuh. Clutch, £45, Coast

Follow Katie @katiejdannatt ›



ALEXANDER WANG



Don't sweat it

A quirky printed neoprene sweatshirt is the perfect spring alternative to a jumper.

Digital Fashion Editor Jess Edwards wears: Sweatshirt, £66, The Fifth Label at Urban Outfitters. Jeans, £270, Paige. Shoes, £120, Karen Millen

Follow Jess @Jess MessEdwards

Be that girl

Star style

HOW THE
A-list
WEAR IT!

Simple block-colour, voluminous separates are the perfect way to work a wetsuit fabric, and JESSICA ALBA keeps her accessories minimal for a cool, clean look.



Unlikely style icons

Jumbo jumpers



Outerwear with oomph

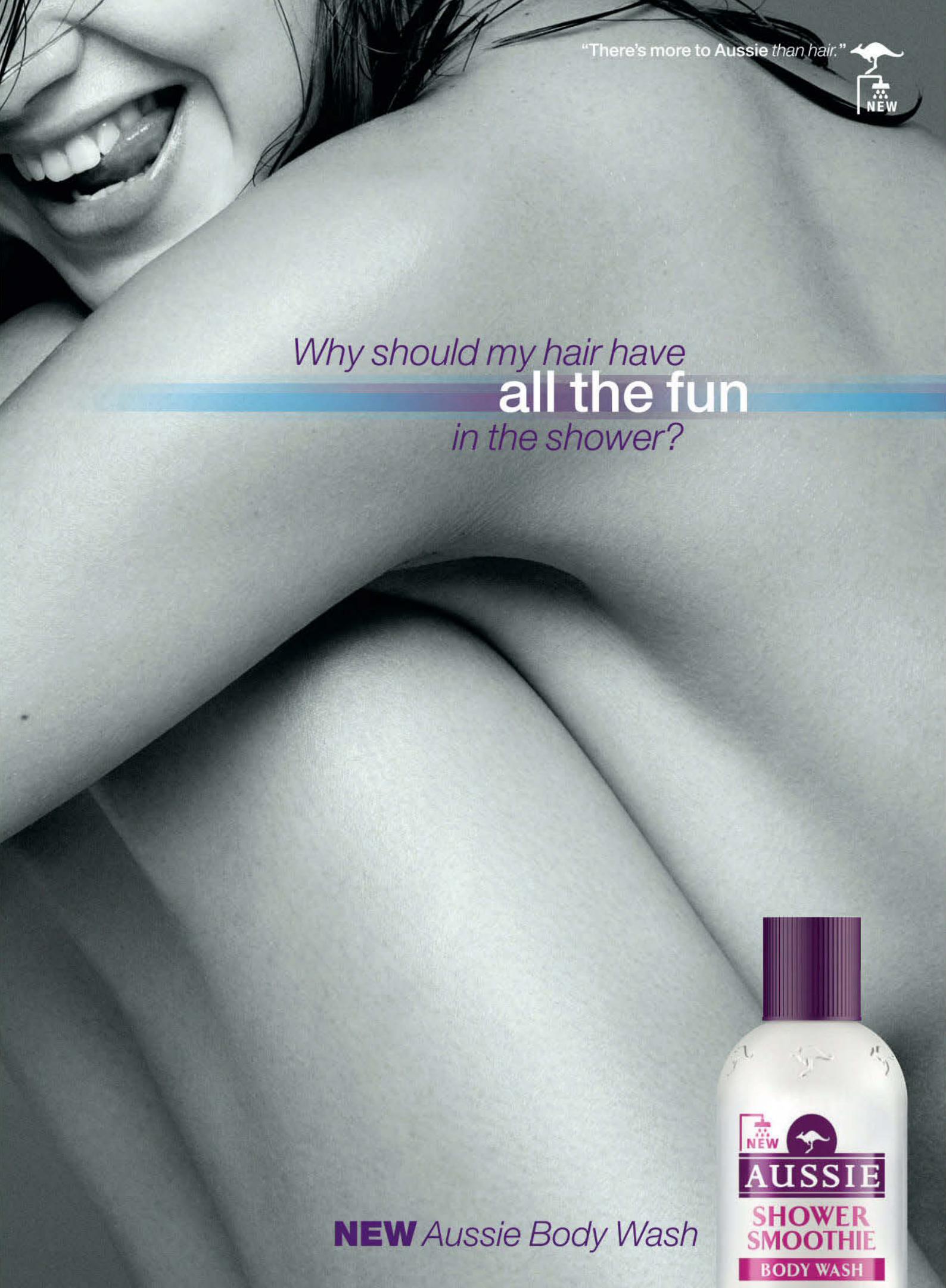


Full skirted



Dress to impress





"There's more to Aussie than hair."



*Why should my hair have
all the fun
in the shower?*



NEW Aussie Body Wash

Be that girl



Gothic berry lips

We tried it...

1 Before going bold with this statement colour, gently exfoliate your lips to avoid a cracked, flaky look. Don't own a lip polish? Some sugar and olive oil mixed together works just as well.

3 Apply your lipstick using a firm, flat concealer brush rather than a fine lip one – it will cover a larger surface area and help to create a more defined lip edge.



2 Blank out your natural lip colour with foundation, then line and fill with a liner that matches your lipstick shade of choice. The waxy pencil will stop matt lipstick from giving you 'dry mouth', and also increase staying power.

The kit...



"There's more to Aussie than hair."



Guess what we've found out about Aussie girls?

*They've got bodies. Not just hair, but arms, legs,
the whole package.*

*So, after years of performing miracles
on their hair, we've decided to
shower (sorry) love and attention
on the rest of them. Meet our new
Aussie Body Washes.*

*Fragrant, creamy concoctions that'll
leave your skin feeling as **soft** and **smooth**
as a **smooth** landing
on the surface of a **smoothie**.*

*Turns out skin loves **exotic** Australian
ingredients as much as hair does.*

*So give your **bod** a taste of the bliss
your hair's been experiencing
all these years. After all, who wants skin that's,
green with **envy**?*



Be that girl

Lust
HAVES

Creature comforts

Bright faux fur and adorable animal prints make for some fun pieces this Easter



Shoes, £445;
leopard-print
clutch, £895, both
Christian Louboutin.
Lilac clutch, £230;
keyrings, £110 each,
all Coach. Scarf,
£132, Essentiel

PS

For more cute and
quirky accessories,
check out River
Island, Accessorize
and New Look



VERSACE EROS POUR FEMME

THE NEW FRAGRANCE FOR WOMEN





Get a load of those puppy-dog eyes

Andy Jordan

This 25-year-old might be Made In Chelsea, but when it comes to relationships, he's a country gent

Where are you taking us?

"To a country cottage just outside St Ives in Cornwall. In the kitchen there would be lots of nice wine and food for me to cook. I don't know what I'm talking about with wine; I just like red. I also love a boogie. My favourite date restaurant is Little Italy in London's Soho, because after dinner they clear the tables away and the next minute you're on the dance floor."

Why not Chelsea? Are you scared we'll bump into your exes - Louise Thompson, perhaps?

"That's one reason. But I've done Chelsea since I was 16 years old. I don't do dates around home. I wouldn't go anywhere super-swanky like The Ivy or Sushisamba either. It gives off all the wrong messages. I'd rather fall in love in a coffee shop

and then treat you down the line to a fancy dinner. I recently had a date in a coffee shop and it was awesome. It revolves around conversation; if you can sit there for two hours you know it's good. There's no awkward, 'Where's this going?'; 'Is he sleazy?'; 'Are we going back to his or hers?'"

So drunk dates don't do it for you?

"The shittest date I ever had was after my brother Chris flew back from Australia. He arrived with a bottle of whiskey to toast us all being back together, so I downed a couple of shots and was an hour late for the date. After apologising profusely, I spilt two espresso martinis all over my white shirt. It was a nightmare."

What outfit would float your boat?

"I say don't dress up. I like jeans and a T-shirt with some beaten-up Chelsea boots. If you fall in love with a girl with no makeup on, then when she dresses up it's an extra bonus."

Do you go 'all the way' on a first date?

"I've never been on a date and gone the whole way. I'm sure I probably tried! I've had one-night stands; they were drunken mistakes. I'm incredibly awkward when faced with that situation."

How many women have you slept with?

"I reckon fewer than 25. With me, it's quality not quantity."

Quality? You sound very confident in your abilities!

"I'd like to think so, yes. I've had compliments in the past!"

You're a musician; can we trust you to be faithful on tour?

"100%. I cheated once in my life, when I was 23, and I didn't like it at all, so I know I wouldn't do it again. I've also been cheated on once. It was awful – I was gutted."

It's a little too early to ask, but we're forward: do you dream of marriage and kids?

"I've two godchildren [Charlie, nine, and Alfie, five] and I love hanging out with them. Recently I was loaned a convertible BMW Z4 and I convinced them both that it was a Transformer. We drove around London in it. Times like that make me think I really do want to be a dad."

What's the most important thing in a relationship?

"That a girl has her own stuff going on. I love a girl who's driven. I hope 2015 is the year I find her."

• *Catch Andy on tour from 10 March (see Cosmopolitan.co.uk/andyjordan for tickets). Made In Chelsea is back in April.*

Google stalk!

The obligatory pre-date check-up threw up the following...

- Andy is a qualified surf instructor. Dude.
- He lived in Sweden as a kid, where he swam competitively.
- Oh, and his single *Whole Lot Of Water* reached number 71 in the UK charts in 2013. Clearly he loves water...
- ...but he hates the dark – he has recurring nightmares about a poltergeist and sleeps with the light on. Sexy!

Miranda Kerr



All prices are non-binding RRP's including VAT. Prices are subject to change from time to time without prior notice. Please check with the participating boutique at the time of purchase. Miranda Kerr wears items priced from £49 to £219.

Collection from £49


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#lovetakingitoff

GARNIER



Be that girl

Ellie Kemper
stars in Tina Fey's
*Unbreakable
Kimmy Schmidt*



Meet Kimmy

Your new TV best friend

After being locked up for 15 years in an underground bunker as part of a creepy doomsday cult, Kimmy Schmidt is finally rescued. OK, that might not exactly sound like the most laugh-inducing concept for a TV comedy... except, as the brainchild of *Mean Girls* and *30 Rock* creator Tina Fey, *Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt* is effortlessly funny and fresh. Kimmy is played by Ellie Kemper (who you might recognise from *Bridesmaids*); as she tries to navigate her new life above ground in New York City – from dating to

how to operate a hand dryer – she'll win you over with her sunny take on life and even sunnier wardrobe.

And with the sharpest co-stars (*30 Rock*'s Jane Krakowski plays her boss) doling out signature Fey one-liners, it's an utter joy. The best bit is that you don't have to hold out for once-a-week catch-ups because the whole of the first season will drop in one go on Netflix on 6 March. *New Girl*'s Jess and *The Mindy Project*'s Mindy had better watch their backs.

OUR PAST TV BFFS

- 1994** We're best of *Friends* with Rachel Green
- 1997** Buffy – BFF and badass vampire-slayer
- 1998** Drinking bud Karen Walker of *Will & Grace*
- 2005** Grey's Anatomy's smart cookie Meredith Grey
- 2011** Jess from *New Girl*: weird yet truly wonderful
- 2012** *Scandal*'s Olivia Pope can handle ALL our drama



BAROMETER

All over it

ACTUAL PICTURES

Hands up who thinks a photo you can stick on a wall beats Instagram. We love Polaroid's Zip Instant Mobile Printer – it pairs wirelessly with any smartphone or tablet to print 2x3ins colour pics. Cute! £109.99, from Polaroid.com, out in spring.

GET YOUR TEE ON

Choose your Red Nose Day designer T-shirt now – there are creations by Matthew Williamson, Diane von Furstenberg, Karl Lagerfeld and more. £14.99, TK Maxx stores or Tkmaxx.com.



SUNDAY SOUNDTRACK

Rest your mind to Rebecca Ferguson's album *Lady Sings The Blues* – her take on Billie Holiday classics, out 9 March. Beautiful.

CHARITY BLING

Check out Astley Clarke's gorgeous bracelets – 20% of the proceeds goes to children's charity TheirWorld. From £95, Astleyclarke.com.



So over it

BAD HABITS

Ditch 'em with the help of *Better Than Before* (£16.99, Two Roads, out 12 March) by Gretchen Rubin, author of best-seller *The Happiness Project*.>





The Album

CHAOS AND THE CALM BY JAMES BAY

The hot genius in the hat who scored this year's Brits Critics' Choice accolade continues his takeover with his debut album. With his grubby voice and clever lyrics, it's no wonder Taylor Swift is a fan. James said she grabbed him backstage at a gig, started reciting his lyrics and generally gushed about how much she loves him – and it's clear why. JB's cool blend of indie rock and soul is unlike anything you've heard before. While hit single *Hold Back The River* is deep and thoughtful, we love the upbeat *Best Fake Smile* and romantic *If You Ever Want To Be In Love*.

Out 23 March



The Film

STILL ALICE

Julianne Moore has put in many a shining performance during her career, but this one takes the biscuit – and all the awards (including a Golden Globe and a Bafta). As Alice, a woman suffering from early-onset Alzheimer's, Julianne gives us a heartbreakingly insightful look into how it might feel to lose your identity – and life as you know it. Kristen Stewart also features as Alice's problem daughter. Although far from easy viewing at times, that's what makes *Still Alice* all the more moving. Be prepared not just to weep, but to full-on ugly-cry.

Out 6 March

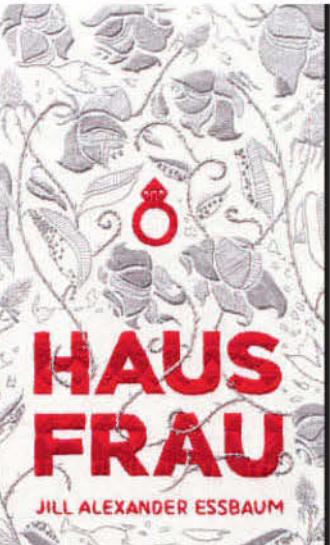


The Film

SUITE FRANÇAISE

Finally, a WWII drama that offers us a rare glimpse of the realities of wartime through a woman's eyes. Based entirely on real events in rural France, Lucile Angellier (welcome back, Michelle Williams) is a beautiful and gracious woman who falls for a German officer staying at her house during the occupation. Add in a strong cast of Kristin Scott Thomas, Margot Robbie and Ruth Wilson, and you have a seriously captivating film. The suspense and romance is set against a devastating backdrop, and the combination will have your heart racing.

Out 13 March



The Book

HAUSFRAU BY JILL ALEXANDER ESSBAUM

It's the book that will have everyone talking, but the main character, Anna Benz, is decidedly unlikeable in the first few chapters. In fact, you'll want to shout, 'Get a grip, woman!' Choosing to become a housewife, she's sleepwalked into a comfy life in suburban Switzerland with her rich, unpleasant banker husband. But you're soon pulled into Anna's stifling world as she endeavours to make sense of who she is and move on from her secret past. She tries to learn German to connect with the people around her, but ends up indulging in a series of affairs until tragedy strikes. The author spent unhappy years in Switzerland and the sense of alienation in the book rings true. By the end you might like Anna a little more – and you'll certainly have a lot to think about.

Out 26 March (£14.99, Pan Macmillan) ♦



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MILLENNIAL
masterclass
PART 10

'Be yourself and speak up more'



Georgia Gould, 28,
has learnt how to make her voice heard in

a world of older men

My interest in politics began at 14 when I joined the Labour Party – my dad [former Labour adviser Philip Gould, who died in 2011] is probably to thank for that! I became a party organiser at 18, then a councillor for Kentish Town at 24, but I kept finding myself in rooms full of greying men thinking, 'Really? Am I the only young person here?'

I tried to blend in at first, but I soon found it's better to be yourself – politics isn't just for men in suits. I also noticed that women are less vocal, so I vowed to pipe up more. It's easier when you're speaking on behalf of many – I have a responsibility.

A lot of young people struggle to find their voice when it comes to politics. In my experience they do care, but often don't know how to get involved, and politicians don't know how to engage them. So I travelled around the country, collecting young people's stories and opinions for my book *Wasted* – designed to help politicians engage people of all ages.

I was so inspired by the entrepreneurial spirit and creativity I saw – people using blogs and YouTube to get involved in activism online and make their own opportunities. Not everyone has the same early access to politics as I did, but I want to help ensure politicians listen to young people, so everyone can have a say on the issues that really matter.

• **Wasted: How Misunderstanding Young Britain Threatens Our Future (£14.99, Little, Brown)**



Kiri Kalenko, 28, from Nottinghamshire, is a senior chocolatier at Hotel Chocolat

Interested?

QUALIFICATIONS A food degree helps, but it's not required – we hire based on people's passion and personality.
KEY SKILLS You can't be afraid to get messy and you do need basic cooking skills. It helps if you know your way around a piping bag too!

The first question people usually ask me is, "Don't you get sick of chocolate?" The answer's no – I love it just as much as I did when I started working here six years ago. I'm much fussier now though – I'll only eat the chocolate we make here.

I was over the moon when I got a job as an apprentice chocolatier at Hotel Chocolat after finishing my home-economics degree at Liverpool University.

I worked my way up to my current role creating chocolate and absolutely love it – I'm learning all the time. For example, I can now tell where in the world chocolate originates just by the taste

– Madagascan beans have notes of red fruits, while Ecuadorian beans give chocolate a more smoky flavour. It takes a while for your palate to develop, and the only way to improve it is to eat more chocolate. Shame, that!

Every day is different, but it always starts with a 10am tasting. Everyone in the team presents new flavours they've been working on, and we all give each other feedback on flavour and texture. Once a week, we show the best ones to our CEO. If he approves, they'll go into production.

The first chocolate I created that got the CEO's seal of approval was the Mojito Truffle – a white-chocolate shell containing a lime, mint and rum ganache.

I was still in training and I worked so hard on it. I'm proud to say it's still part of the range today!

Best bit It might sound

pretty cheesy, but I love my colleagues. Working in a kitchen alongside these driven, passionate people is amazing.

Worst bit I could definitely live without all the paperwork and meetings.

My mantra
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INSTINCTS
AND DO
WHAT YOU
LOVE

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Confessions

Because it's good to share... right?

SPA SLIP-UPS

Relaxation isn't always... well, relaxing...

Heads up

At my first-ever spray tan, the woman told me to undress and handed me a little paper hat, so I took my clothes off, carefully tucked my hair in, and got ready for my tan. But when the beautician walked in, she burst out laughing – turns out my ‘hat’ was actually a pair of paper pants. Not only had I shown my bits off when I didn’t have to, but I felt like a total idiot.

Philippa, 28, journalist, London

Waxing & waning

I was always very proud of my wild, bushy brows, but eventually even I had to admit they were getting out of control, so I decided to have them waxed. When the first strip came off, I screamed my head off. It was agony! In fact, it hurt so much I refused to carry on. Left with just one waxed brow, for months my expression was ‘lopsided surprise’. Now, I just go au naturel.

Amanda*, 20, student, Manchester

Licence to chill

My husband and I had treated ourselves to a winter break and, determined to make the most of the facilities, we



Mistaking icing sugar for dry shampoo was a big mistake

headed straight to the spa area. Putting on our swimming costumes, we relaxed in the heated outdoor pool – but when we finished and leapt out to dash back in, the door was locked, and we were freezing. I ran, dripping wet and shivering, to reception, where the other guests looked at me like I was mad, and a bemused-looking member of staff unlocked the door – as slowly as

humanly possible. At least my burning embarrassment kept me warm...

Molly*, 27, digital writer, Brighton

Nail fail

Spotting a cut-price deal for a reflexology session, I decided to go for it. But when I got there, the first thing I noticed was the reflexologist’s nails ➤

— they were sharp, pointy and about two inches long! My feet felt like they were being massaged by tiny knives – it was the least relaxing thing I've ever experienced. By mid-session, I was in so much pain that I had to say something. Her response? "It's not my nails, you've got too many 'crystals' inside your feet." My poor feet were covered in scratches.

Sandi, 26, doctor, Wolverhampton

Hammam dramz

When I was on holiday in Istanbul, I went to a hammam – a traditional Turkish bath. I was expecting to be pampered, but instead I was greeted by an old lady dressed in nothing but a greying bra and pants barking at me to strip off. I had to lie on a marble slab in just my knickers in a room of giggling German tourists, while the granny scrubbed me down with what felt like a brick. When she motioned for me to hold my knickers out so she could douse my bits in freezing water, I hit a real low. It took a few beers to recover.

Suzy, 36, author, London

The cheek of it

My friends and I booked a massage and facial each. I didn't know which treatment I was having first, but when they handed me a paper thong I assumed it was the massage, so I stripped off, pulled on the flimsy pants and lay on my front. The door opened – and I heard a gasp. My bare bum was *not* what the facialist was expecting! She gently covered me with a towel and told me to lie on my back – before massaging my hot, blushing face.

Aisha, 27, dancer, London

Double trouble

My sister and I wanted to be pampered together, so we booked a couples massage – but hadn't quite realised what a sexy treatment it was... We were slathered in a lot of oil and the main event was a 'sensual' vigorous boob massage! We were then pushed into the shower before being individually wrapped in clingfilm. We were crying with laughter by the time they set us free – weirdest spa day ever.

Hannah, 23, artist, London

MEN CONFESS

"I said *two* sugars!"



COLLEAGUE CLASHES

Those times he wanted his desk to swallow him up

THE NAME GAME

I couldn't remember the name of a woman at work, but too much time had passed to ask. One day, my manager asked me to get something signed by 'Alex Moss*'. I didn't know who that was, so when I bumped into my forgotten-named colleague, I thought I'd ask. She looked very offended – it was her! I pretended I'd been joking, but she didn't seem to buy it. It turned out she was really senior too...

Ryan, 31, accountant, Liverpool

BOARDROOM EYES

On a night out, I met a girl and brought her back to mine. She was really wild – in a bad way. She tore my back

to shreds so I was glad to see her go the next day. Two weeks later, my boss and I were interviewing candidates for a job – and she walked in. We stared at each other awkwardly before completing the shortest and most uncomfortable interview ever.

Ben*, 29, journalist, London

CARELESS WHISPER

A colleague's son had been having serious mental-health problems, and she was understandably really upset. I work in the mental-health sector, so everyone in the office was trying to be as supportive as possible. Until,

that is, the printer started spewing out paper and I yelled, "It's lost its bloody mind!" The woman's smile dropped and I felt so awful.

Andrew, 28, support worker, Manchester

VICIOUS CYCLE

I was half-asleep one morning as I packed my bag and got on my bike. When I got to work, I realised I hadn't brought any trousers. I phoned a friend, but until he arrived with something more appropriate for me to change into I had to sit wearing a shirt coupled with skintight, sweat-soaked cycling shorts.

Carl*, 31, customer adviser, Edinburgh ♦



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SEX & THE SINGLE GUY



Follow Tom: @TomCraine or Tomcraine.com

We all have baggage – so relax, says **Tom Craine**

When someone asks me what my favourite TV programme is, I usually claim it's *The Wire*. I spout off about how the unorthodox narrative structure appeals to me as a writer, before clicking my fingers and ordering a whisky (because that's what intelligent people drink). But in truth, my favourite show is so lowbrow, it's practically a moustache – MTV's reality show, *Ex On The Beach*.

For those of you who have managed to miss this 'treat,' here's how it works: a clutch of beautiful singletons are dropped off in paradise hoping to find love, only for their perma-tanned exes to emerge from the sea. They then yell at each other for the next six episodes, while I clap my hands in childish glee. There's more baggage on the show than a Kardashian's luggage allowance – and I find it absolutely fascinating.

Last week, I was discussing the whole baggage issue with my friend James. James is great – handsome, successful and a single dad. His son is brilliant too,

'Life hands us baggage at every turn – and it's a large part of what makes us who we are'

making origami swans in his spare time and selling them for charity (yes, really).

Yet whenever James goes on a date and the fact that he's a parent arises, he can see his date's alarm bells ringing out a loud-and-clear Baggage Warning. I admit this alarm used to panic me too. In my early twenties I dated a girl called Lizzie, who happened to be a mum. One Saturday afternoon it was suggested we go to the fairground so I could meet her little chap.

Lizzie hated heights, so it was my job to accompany her son on the rides. I remember feeling strangely masculine, while happily secure in the knowledge that height restrictions would keep us away from anything too scary. ('Sorry, Champ, I'd love to ride the Wheel Of Death, but you're not tall enough. Bloody health and safety, eh? Grrr?')

The three of us had a great day. But when I got home, panic set in. Suddenly, the addition of Lizzie's son made me realise there was more to this relationship than just us. Shit was getting real, so I told her I needed time to think – and we gradually became Just Good Friends.

Now, that decision sometimes plays on my mind. I've always thought it's important to be honest about who you are (I recently saw a man in a 'Live Fast, Die Young' slogan tee buying broccoli. Choose your team, yeah?). But equally, part of me wonders what might have happened if I'd reminded myself that baggage is just part of life.

Because it is – and the older I get, the more I realise this. Life hands us baggage at every turn, and it's a large part of what makes us who we are. James and Lizzie wouldn't be the great people they are if it wasn't for their experiences, and for their tremendous kids.

Now that I've got more of my own baggage in tow, I understand better the need to allow people to have a past (and, if it's particularly fruity, to encourage them to relate the tales, with actions, for my amusement). Plus, who knows? You might get an origami swan out of it.



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SEX & THE SINGLE GIRL



Follow Lauren @Franklinsays

Our new Single Girl columnist **Lauren Franklin** worries how much sex has changed since she was last dating

“**B**e honest,” I say, anxiously. “Do I look normal, or is there anything weird about me?” I’m in my bedroom, naked, in front of my best mate Ollie. He’s gay, cynical and capable of tear-inducing honesty.

“You look like a bird in an oil spill,” he says. “Why have you unevenly covered yourself in tar?”

“Oll-iiee!” I wail. “It’s my Fake Bake. When I wash it off I’ll look like ‘California,’ apparently.”

Hi there. I’m Lauren, your new columnist, and it’s great to meet you. But why, you ask, am I standing in front of my friend asking him to judge my streaky, naked body? Well, until recently I spent eight years in a relationship, which means for a *really* long time only one other person saw me naked.

This is no exaggeration – I’m the type of girl who gets changed under her towel in the gym. But now I’m back on

*I spent
eight years in
a relationship...
but now I'm back
on the dating
scene'*

the dating scene, which is how I found myself about to go on a third date with Mark – handsome, cool job, loves his mum, smokes the right amount of cigarettes (*I know I shouldn’t like a smoker, but...*) and funny (*kind of*).

“Although sometimes he speaks a bit too loudly, like he wants everyone to hear what he’s saying,” I tell Ollie. “Which makes me think he’s secretly arrogant. Or perhaps he’s a little bit deaf. I’ll ask.” This is my first third date with anyone, and if *Friends* and the increasingly suggestive text messages I’ve been receiving are anything to go by, this date is when *The Sex* happens. And I’m terrified.

Admittedly, Mark’s not the only person I’ve dated since my split. I’ve had a string of first dates that were so catastrophic I’ve plunged into a pit of paranoia. In short, my self-esteem isn’t great. But Mark seems keen, so I’m eager for the sex to go well.

“So, what do you think about my pubes?” I ask Ollie. “I’m going for ‘neat triangle.’ You know: uncontrived.”

“Your vagina looks very uncontrived,” Ollie nods helpfully. “And that’s what boys want, isn’t it?” I ask.

Ollie looks exasperated. “Lauren, vaginas aren’t my forte. Maybe he’d like you to trim your pubes into a rocket shape with flames. Who knows?”

I feel a bit sorry for him – he only popped over to pick up his *Mad Men* boxset. But I feel sorry for me too. Dating has changed a lot since the last time around. Back then

I was at uni, when dates were conducted in places with three-for-one offers on WKD Blue. Nowadays it’s a completely foreign land, inhabited by Tinder, Snapchat and WhatsApp, with its paranoia-inducing time stamps. If dating has changed this much, does it mean having sex with a new man has changed too?

I think being faintly terrified is fair enough. But then I catch myself Googling ‘Rocket-shaped pubes’ and realise it might be time to relax...

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WHAT'S YOUR
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A large photograph of actress Cameron Diaz is positioned on the left side of the page. She has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a white, sleeveless, knee-length dress. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. Her right hand is resting on her hip, and her left arm is bent with her hand behind her head.

Woman we love

REALLY, SHE
NEEDS NO
INTRODUCTION.

CAMERON DIAZ,
THE ULTIMATE COSMO
GIRL, SERVES UP
KILLER LIFE-COACH-
STYLE REALNESS

Interview

LAUREN BANS

Photographs

MATTHIAS

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cameron

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A

pproximately 22 minutes after I sit down for coffee with Cameron Diaz, she's teaching me how to, er, stay regular. We're tucked away at a corner table at one of the more nondescript west Hollywood hotels. "Don't tell anyone about this place!" she pleaded when we sat down. Now she's deep into a soliloquy on the digestive tract, mine in particular. "First thing in the morning, you have to drink this much water," Cameron instructs, holding up a wine-bottle-sized canister of H2O that she carries at all times. "Don't put any food in your belly first though," she warns. "Just the water, then you do a little..." – here, Cam wiggles in her chair – "and, whoosh, it just pushes it all out."

You can thank her grandma for the actress's potty-related candour. "*Mi abuela* used to take my sister and me to the bathroom," Cameron remembers. "One of us would sit with her on the edge of the bathtub and hang out until the one on the toilet went poop, and then we'd switch. It was very important to her that we excrete." The lesson stuck. Cameron has never been bashful about the body. She's the kind of lady you wish you had around when your tampon jumps out of your bag in a busy bar or the night you accidentally fart in front of a new guy. 'Wish' is the operative word. Because despite Cam's no-subject-is-off-limits gal-pal vibe, the truth is she's a bona fide megastar. In 2014, she was among the highest-paid actresses in Hollywood, pulling in £12million, on a par with the likes of Angelina Jolie. Yet it's hard to imagine talking bowel movements with Angie. Stars of a certain calibre are typically rehearsed almost to the point of droiddom. But Cameron has remained candid, TMI-ing the entire span of her 20-years-and-counting film career. (Note: Jennifer Lawrence clearly studied at the Diaz school of celebrity.)

This willingness to be both ballsy and bawdy has fed many of Cameron's

recent career moves, including female-driven hits *Bad Teacher* and *The Other Woman*. She was delighted when her money-grubbing, pot-smoking bad teacher turned out to be awesomely irredeemable. "I loved how she never apologises. When I was reading the script and I got to the last few pages, I was like, if she all of a sudden comes around and says, 'I see my bad ways,' I will throw this script out the window." While she's clearly drawn to playing irreverent bad girls willing to cash in on their sex appeal, that's not the case in real life. Cam mentions a time back when she was presented the opportunity to be arm candy for ridiculously wealthy men. "Any guy with a lot of money can sit at a tableful of 10 girls and pay for it

all. Those girls might think that the meal is free. But for me, sitting at that table costs me something," she says, choosing her words carefully, "because people then think I might be doing more for that man than just being company for him at that table. My mother always told me, 'Nothing is free.'"

The actress's signature accessibility hit a new high a year ago with the publication of her best-selling debut, *The Body Book*, in which she enthusiastically offers up her opinions on everything from Taco Bell to waxing one's pubic hair entirely. We now know that she is staunchly against the latter. As a guest on *The Graham Norton Show* last spring, she bent forward, hovering her face over her lap, to praise her nether thatch. She's ›



You make
the same
mistake over
and over
until you learn
your lesson

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fantastically frank about sex as well. "It's like pooping," she says. "It's something healthy that we need to be doing for many different reasons." It's possible that we know more about the human being (and body) that is Cameron Diaz than we've known about any famous person in the history of, well, famous people.

There's a lot to know too. Cameron is happy to share her wisdom from decades of dating stars such as Matt Dillon, Jared Leto and Justin Timberlake. "Here's the thing," she whispers over her iced coffee. "You make the same mistake over and over again until you learn your lesson. We girls sometimes do the thing where we pick the same person over and over again – they look and seem different, but deep down, they're the same. And that's on us. That's our issue to deal with." So what's a good



relationship in Cam's eyes? "You have to find someone in the same place as you," she stresses. "Timing is everything. Most relationships that people get in when they're young, the girls are like, 'I wanna get married!' and the guys are like, 'Maybe some day...' If you get into a relationship where you want something the guy doesn't want, it's never gonna work. You're never going to get him to be in that place. No matter how old you are, finding the guy who's in the same place as you are and who wants to show up is the only way a relationship works."

She and new husband Benji Madden of Good Charlotte have clearly found each other at the right time. Shortly after our interview, they were married in an intimate ceremony in front of close family and friends. At 42, Cam's found her happy place. "I'm comfortable just being who I am," she says simply. And despite all that's said about the lack of roles for women her age in Hollywood, she's found some doozies. Like the one,

"Where I'm in roller skates trying to have sex with my husband and his dick won't get hard," which is, delightfully, how she describes *Sex Tape*.

In the remake of *Annie* (released on DVD this month) she faced one of her worst fears, second only to, "dangling off the Empire State Building" – that is, singing: "It was the most terrifying thing I've ever done in a movie. I cried a lot." Her Miss Hannigan is a failed pop star who collects foster kids to pay the bills. "She's bitter because her chance at fame was stolen, and all she can taste is that taste," Cameron says, "Which is very much in line with this day and age. People determine your value by how many friends you have on Facebook or if you're Instagram-famous."

Cam herself recently quit all that. She hasn't tweeted or Instagrammed since September. "I just decided that this doesn't feel good to me. Why would I want to take time out of what I'm doing to tell people I'm doing it? I'm gonna be there, in the moment." Pressed further, she theorises, "I think social media is a crazy-ass experiment on



Cameron and Benji tied the knot in January

society. The way people use it to get validation from a bunch of strangers is dangerous. What's the point?"

Admittedly, her new stance on social media is a departure from the 'share all' Cameron we've grown accustomed to. But fret not, she is currently at work on a follow-up to her much-applauded *The Body Book*, which will surely contain more of her key insights and overshares. And should you ever find yourself at lunch with the actress, you can bet she'll have #NoFilter.

Quick-fire Cameron

• SWEAT DAILY •

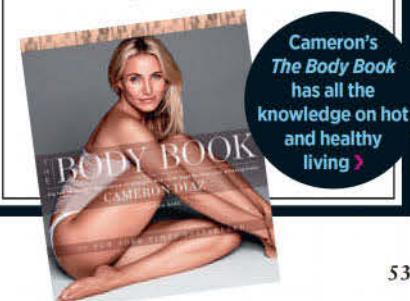
"You have to just do it. Once you commit and really put in the effort, your body goes, 'Oh, it's not OK to be without this.' People say, 'My body rejects exercise.' No, it doesn't. Your mind rejects exercise."

• TREAT YOURSELF •

"Wellbeing is an equation. Remember, you don't have to have the whole cake, you can have a piece. Don't deprive yourself. Have fun. Just be self-aware. If your equation is 80% good, 20% bad most of the time, then a little movement toward the centre isn't going to affect you much."

• REST & RECOVER •

"When I was filming *Annie*, I caught a chest cold so I came home right after work and slept as long as I could. Usually, I'd be waking up early to jump around for 20 minutes, but the best thing for my body when I'm getting sick is to rest and not force myself to exercise."



Cameron's
The Body Book
has all the
knowledge on hot
and healthy
living ↗

Woman we love



Name:

Cameron Diaz

My favourite way to break a sweat:

Haaa Haa Haaaa

My happy place:

Home

My first celebrity crush:

Harrison Ford

My favourite emoji:

crystal Ball

My favourite movie snack:

POPCORN!!!

My favourite healthy snack:

avocado toast

No matter how old and ratty it gets, I will never throw away my:

favorite T-Shirt
dont know who makes it
or I'd buy 10 more

Life

... never fails to make me laugh

The last app I downloaded:

Moon Phase

The weirdest thing in my handbag right now:

Maldon Salt

Knowledge
is POWER

Jess

ADDITIONAL PHOTOGRAPHS XPOSURE PHOTOS. HAIR CHRIS McMILLAN FOR LIVING PROOF AT SOLO ARTISTS. MAKEUP GENEVIEVE FOR LANCOME. NAILS APRIL FOREMAN AT THE WALL GROUP USING CHANEL SET DESIGN JESSE NEMETH AT BAILEY REPS. PRODUCTION MICHELLE HYNEK FOR FIRST SHOT PRODUCTIONS. CAMERON WEARS FIRST SPREAD DRESS, CALVIN KLEIN SHOES, DIOR RINGS (WORN THROUGHOUT ON RIGHT HAND). CAMERON'S OWN ALL OTHER JEWELLERY, DAVID WEBB. 2ND PAGE: DRESS, VERSACE JEWELLERY, HOORNENBUHS. 3RD PAGE: TOP, NARCISO RODRIGUEZ. TROUSERS, SPORTMAX. BELT, CHARVET NECKLACE, COLEOPTE. THIS PAGE: DRESS, EMILIO PUCCI. SHOES, CASADEI JEWELLERY, SMITH + MARA.

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*Call-back, 162 women (France & UK)

**KantarWorldPanel, Sept 2012-2014



GARNIER

'Am I weird for keeping his toothbrush?'

Long-distance love is hard – and sometimes the right thing to do is say goodbye, says our columnist Jameela Jamil

Not long ago, I left somebody I love so much, the mere thought of him makes me scared I might pass out. Somebody who, when I consider the idea of not waking up to his smile, triggers hour-long panic attacks that end with a worrying amount of toast.

Why would I leave such a king among men, even for a new life in LA? Because we're not the kind of couple who can gracefully execute a long-term, long-distance affair. While I know couples who do so successfully, to me these relationships are a tricky combination of pen pal and chastity belt. I need to be cuddled regularly. I don't like talking on the phone. I hate Skype – it feels like I'm standing outside a closed patisserie. I can see the cake, but can't touch it.

In a long-distance relationship you share anecdotes, not experiences. You often lose your connection. You have to play down the fun you're having without your partner, and be careful when talking about a new friend of the opposite sex. And you feel so lonely. At least if you're single you adjust to solitude, and are exhilarated by the possibility of new romantic adventures. There's light at the end of *that* tunnel.

My job means I may never know where I'll be more than a week or so in advance, so I can never make plans. It

means the other person needs to be able to set off at a moment's notice, never worrying about the cost of a long-haul flight. This basically cuts my list of options down to wealthy pensioners, sultans and Batman.

And while I couldn't say this to him (for some stupid reason it felt cheap), I can say it to you: I *do* have sexual needs. Being in love with someone you seldom see doesn't dampen the sparks lit by other funny, flirty men. It's hard enough to commit long-term to a person who's under your nose, let alone someone mainly viewed on a computer screen.

For some of us, long-distance love feels like we're putting each other on hold to stop us finding someone new. There are, of course, those total legends who love each other so much that nobody external excites them enough to give up what they have. Those couples deserve medals and cash rewards. They also, by the way, often have some of the shittest times along the way – and I just don't see that strength in myself.

If you're in a similar situation, I'd urge you to be honest about what you want – and what you're capable of. Be brutal in your scrutiny of how well you work together when you share the same soil and hours. How much adversity can you withstand? How much temptation can you resist? Ultimately, you should never feel bad about doing something that's the best thing for you.

For me, saying goodbye felt like gouging my heart out with a splintered wooden spoon. But it was a surprisingly clean break: dignified,

loving and kind. I hope the blameless end to what we had means that one day we can put the pieces back together.

I've kept his toothbrush in case that day ever comes. Yes, it's stupid, creepy and, frankly, unhygienic. But dammit, under my layers of pragmatism, there's a romantic. We'll see how it goes – but don't be surprised if my next column is entitled, 'Heartbroken, lonely (and significantly fatter) in LA...'



PHOTOGRAPH TOM WATSON. HAIR ZOE IRWIN. JAMEELA WEARS: COAT, MISS SELFRIDGE; SHOES, LK BENNETT. RING, SIMON HARRISON

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WOMAN IN **GOLD**

KATIE HOLMES / TATIANA MASLANY / MAX IRONS /
CHARLES DANCE / ELIZABETH McGOVERN / JONATHAN PRYCE /

萬物皆有裂隙，這才是生命進化的機會。所以，當你遇到困難時，不妨試著從另一個角度來看問題，你會發現，原來人生還有這麼多美好的可能性。

"Mirren is outstanding in a film that will stay with you forever"

BAZ BAMIGBOYE DAILY MAIL

IN CINEMAS THIS APRIL



Anaïs (right) and
Samantha told
their incredible
story on US TV

'I FOUND MY TWIN ON YOUTUBE'

Separated at birth with no idea she had a twin, Anaïs Bordier, 27, tells us what happened when a friend of hers spotted a very familiar-looking face while watching a video on the internet...

When they adopt a baby, some parents hide the fact from the child – but for as long as I can remember, I've known the truth about my background. The papers Mum and Dad were handed when they took me home to France at three months old said I was an only child, born in South Korea to a single mother.

I couldn't have asked for better parents. They continually told me I was meant to be their daughter,

and being adopted didn't bother me, although it was tricky as a child when people asked why I didn't look like my blonde, blue-eyed mum. Maybe that's why I invented an imaginary sister – one who looked just like me.

As I got older I'd wonder about my birth mum. Was she married? Was she tall? What was she doing right now? But I didn't have any photos and when I tried to picture her I couldn't.

My dream was to work in fashion, so when I was 22 I

decided to head to London to study fashion design. I fell in love with the city right away, and spent my time hanging out with my new friends, exploring museums for inspiration and working at fashion shows.

Then one afternoon in December 2012, I was on the bus when my phone beeped. My friend Kelsang had tagged me on Facebook in a YouTube video – he hadn't added a message so, curious, I clicked on the link.

It was a comedy sketch featuring a girl who looked like me playing a schoolgirl. But she didn't just look a bit like me – she looked *exactly* like me. Kelsang didn't know that I was adopted, but he had immediately been struck by how similar we looked. The girl in the video had an American >

Cosmo inspiration

accent, but my face and hair – she even had freckles like mine, which is unusual for Asian women. I told myself it was just a coincidence, but the thought crept in – could we be related? I wanted to track her down, but how? I had no luck contacting the person who'd posted the video, and even if I found this woman's details I could hardly write, 'Hi, I think we might be family'. It seemed too ridiculous.

Over the next two months, I couldn't get her out of my mind. I was desperate to find out more, frustrated I couldn't and scared in case I ever did. When I showed my parents a screengrab of the mystery girl, Mum warned, "In pictures people can look like anyone." But it didn't dampen my curiosity.

Then one morning, I was on the way to college with Kelsang when he said, "Remember that girl in the video? I saw her again, in a film trailer." Shaking, I looked it up online, and at last I had a name: Samantha Futerman. Scrolling through her details, I saw with a jolt that she was Korean too, and that her birthday was the same day as mine – 19 November 1987. Then I read that she'd been adopted too.

I went into shock. I'd grown up thinking I was an only child – it felt impossible that I could have had a sister the whole time. But somewhere inside I knew she was. Deciding to skip college for the day, I raced home, found Samantha's Facebook page and wrote her a message: 'Hey, my name is Anaïs, and I live in

Anaïs Bordier

Hey.

My name is Anaïs, I am french and live in London. About 2 months ago, my friend was watching one of your videos with Kevjumba on youtube, and he saw you and thought that we looked really similar... like... VERY REALLY SIMILAR....we were making jokes about it etc. (I'm always being violent with people and hitting them too hahaha)

Today, he saw the trailer of 21 & over and told me he saw you again, I then checked your name on the cast, stalked you A BIT, and found out you were born the 19th of november 1987.

I checked more of your videos (which are hilarious) and then came upon the 'how it feels to be adopted'... and discovered you were adopted too.

So...I don't want to be too Lindsay Lohan, well...but...how to put it...I was wondering where were you born? I was born on the 19th of November 1987, in Busan but my papers were made at the Holt Children's Institute, so "officially" I was born in Seoul. My korean name is Kim Eunwha. I arrived in France the 5th March 1988, so 3 months later.

You can check my facebook if you want to check the pictures and the videos. It's more obvious on videos...

Let me know...don't freak out...
Lots of Love
Anaïs



The first message between the sisters



A shot from the sisters' *Twinsters* documentary



Anaïs (top) and Samantha aged five

London...' I explained that we looked incredibly similar, had the same birthday, and that I'd been adopted. I ended the message with, 'Don't freak out! Lots of love.'

For the next few hours I constantly refreshed the page. Would

Samantha be happy to find out I existed?

Would she even reply? I scoured her page, poring over photos of

her out with friends, or eating in restaurants. Then a message pinged into my inbox. 'This is so weird,' it read. 'Could we be twins?' I went mad then,

leaping around the room. I called my parents, begging them for my adoption records and childhood pictures –

anything I could send Sam. We were all in shock.

Over the next week, Sam and I messaged constantly. I found out she was an actress in LA, had two brothers and was single. Every new piece of information was

so exciting.

When we arranged to chat on Skype, I was amazed by how alike we were – our laugh, our expressions.

We talked non-stop for three hours. It felt like I'd met half of myself – as if, until now, part of me had been missing.

Three months later, Sam flew to London with some of her friends and family to meet me. Arriving at the flat

where she was staying felt so surreal – I couldn't believe I was about to meet a sister I never knew I had.

When she opened the door we couldn't stop staring at each other. Then I reached out and poked her gently on the forehead, and we fell about laughing.

That week we learnt as much as we could about each other. We both hated cooked vegetables, owned the same brown sandals and were obsessed with Harry Potter. Then, we sat side-by-side as we were told the results of a DNA test. "You can turn and hug your twin," the doctor told us – and we squeezed each other hard.

It was so hard saying goodbye to my sister, but since then, we've met up several times, including a fantastic trip to Korea. We've also made a documentary about our story, called *Twinsters*, which will be getting its world premiere in March. I know our story sounds unbelievable. If I saw a film about a girl finding her long-lost twin online, I'd think, 'That would never happen in real life.' But it did. It happened to me.

SAMANTHA SAYS: I was getting ready for a film premiere with no idea my entire life was about to change when I got Anaïs' message. The face in the attached photo looked so much like me.

Finding that out Anaïs is my sister was wonderful, and watching her face – my face – on Skype was incredibly strange.

So many random events had to line up for us to find each other. I'm just happy that this was our path, and now we're where we're supposed to be.

• For more details go to Twinstersmovie.com ♦

"You can turn and hug your twin," the doctor told us after the DNA test'

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HOW WE BOUGHT A HOME



'WE SHARED A FLAT WITH FIVE OTHER PEOPLE'

Anna Olga, 27, works for an asset-management firm, and bought a two-bedroom flat in south-east London



Apparently, 21% of people who have flat-shared say the biggest benefit is being able to save for a deposit. So when my girlfriend Sian and I moved into a house-share three years ago, we were prepared to grin and bear it for the sake of getting on the housing ladder. Flat-sharing wasn't always ideal – especially as, to keep costs down, we shared with five other people. Sian and I had one small bedroom, and there were only two showers between seven of

us – it was tricky in the mornings, to say the least!

Sometimes things went 'missing' from the fridge, and once it broke, leaving the kitchen awash. It could also be noisy in the evenings if people had friends round. But we managed to save £70,000 in two years, which we used as a deposit on a £315,000 two-bed flat in New Cross Gate. It was worth it – and now, there are fewer rows over the bathroom.

Anna's top tip: If sharing to save, don't let any issues with housemates fester – it's best to discuss them straightaway.

Sharing your bathroom with strangers, only buying clothes in the sales and putting up with your mum asking what time you'll be home... here five women explain how they finally managed to get on the housing ladder

Having a place to call our own is a dream most of us want to make come true, but it seems tougher than ever. According to a survey by the Family Building Society, three-quarters of would-be first-time buyers feel that no matter how much they save 'it never seems to be enough'. For most people the journey to owning their own home takes up to four years – while more than one in seven have to wait at least *seven* years. We asked five women how they made it happen. (Warning: it wasn't easy.)

'I GAVE UP ALL MY TREATS'

Becky Murch, 31, a communications manager, bought a two-bedroom flat in Bristol



To get on the ladder I had to move back home from London to Bristol, where you get more for your money. I found a new job and moved in with my parents to save as much as possible.

But sadly, it meant kissing goodbye to all my favourite habits: I went from treating myself to a posh coffee every morning to drinking instant stuff from the machine at work; I scrapped my gym membership and personal training sessions for running in the park, and instead of buying nice clothes from Selfridges and House Of Fraser, I only let myself buy sale outfits. I also went from

spending around £10 on lunch at places like Pret (a sandwich, drink and crisps can all add up) to making my own from scratch. I had to cut down on nights out too – I'm sure my friends thought I was a total bore. But the idea of my own place spurred me on, and after a year I'd saved enough to put down a 15% deposit.

I finally moved into my £115,000 flat last August. I couldn't be happier to have a place to call my own, and these days I can indulge in some treats again – thank goodness.

Becky's top tip: Plan your meals in advance. You can easily spend £10-15 a day on breakfast, lunch and coffee during the working week – that's £3,500 a year! >

'I MOVED BACK IN WITH MY PARENTS AFTER UNI'

Rebecca Taylor, 30, a marketing manager, bought a one-bedroom flat in Berkshire



I always knew I wanted to buy my own place, so after graduating from Bournemouth University in 2007, I went back to live with my family – my mum, dad and two younger brothers – in Buckinghamshire. Mum was lovely and cooked me dinner every night, but it meant she always wanted to know what time I'd be home, so I couldn't change my plans spontaneously. And she endlessly nagged me about leaving my clothes on the floor of my room! I had a boyfriend at the time, so there wasn't anywhere we could get any privacy, and I didn't really have friends over, either. After having my own space and independence as a student, it was a shock to the system.

That said, it made me and my family closer than ever, and we all get on really well. After five years, I'd saved up enough to put down a deposit on a small house with a garden for £173,000. It even has a walk-in wardrobe, which makes my mum happy...

Rebecca's top tip: Respect that it's your parents' home and that they're doing you a real kindness by letting you live there as an adult (especially if it is rent-free, like it was for me). Try to be helpful and sociable, and not regress to teenage mode too often!



27% of men

said they'd consider a mortgage with a partner they weren't wholly committed to (compared with 15% of women) – just to get on the housing ladder!

'I LIVED OUT OF A SUITCASE'

Emily Saunders, 28, a talent manager, bought a one-bedroom flat in north London



I was living in a beautiful house with three friends, including a couple, when they broke up and we all had to move out. My mum told me about the Shared Ownership scheme [see box, right], so I started saving for a deposit. I put most of my stuff in storage, then basically lived out of a suitcase for the next 14 months. At first, I moved in with my boyfriend

James, but we'd only been together for eight months and it put pressure on our relationship. Next, I lodged for three months with a family who I babysat for regularly. But I soon realised the only way I'd ever reach my target of £14,000 was by not paying rent at all. Luckily, my aunt and uncle agreed I could move into their spare room for six months.

After over a year of stress and upheaval, I eventually

'I moved to a different country'

Tryphena Greenwood, 31, a PR executive, took a job in Dubai for the tax-free salary

Just after my 30th birthday, while staring at my lovely shoe collection, I got panicky about my future. I had a good job and lived within my means, but looking at the 100+ pairs in my wardrobe, I could hear my dad's voice in my head nagging about pensions and savings. Working out that I'd need at least a 20% deposit on a flat, and factoring in the higher cost of property in London, I'd need £70,000. And at my rate of saving, it would take 14 years by the time I could buy a one-bedroom flat! Moving to a tax-free country seemed daunting at first, but I have several friends who made the move to Dubai a few years ago, and their Instagram feeds are constantly filled with sunshine. Unbelievably, I'm now saving around £2,000 a month. I'm not quite there yet, but owning a property has become a mid-thirties reality rather than a mid-forties pipe dream – and I haven't regretted it for a second.

Tryphena's top tip: If you're sending money home, beat hidden bank fees by using a service such as TransferWise – it can save you a small fortune!

saved the money I needed to put a 10% deposit down on a new-build flat. I own 35% of it, and pay rent on the rest. It was so miserable and frustrating not having anywhere I could call home (I never once fully unpacked!), but stepping into my new flat for the first time – without having ruined my relationship with James – made it all worthwhile.

Emily's top tip: Don't give up; there'll be let-downs along the way, but you just have to ride them and learn from each one.

25% of women said they'd rent out a spare room to a lodger

FIVE WAYS TO BUY

1 HELP-TO-BUY SCHEMES

There are two types: equity loans, where the Government lends first-time buyers and existing homeowners up to 20% of the purchase price towards a newly built home, and mortgage guarantee, where the Government promises your lender it will cover part of any losses they may sustain as a result of the mortgage not being repaid. You only need a 5% deposit. For more info visit HelpToBuy.org.uk.

2 JOINT BUYING

This is where two or more people club together to buy a property, usually each putting in a share of the deposit and sharing the mortgage.

3 SHARED OWNERSHIP

A cheaper way to buy, you purchase a percentage of a home and rent the remaining share, usually from a council or housing association. For more info visit ShareToBuy.com.

4 NEWBUY

NewBuy is a Government-backed 'mortgage-indemnity' scheme, which aims to help people with at least a 5% deposit to buy a new-build home. For more info visit NewBuy.org.uk.

5 RIGHT TO BUY

This scheme is for tenants in England, Wales and Northern Ireland who rent their home from their local council or housing association. It allows tenants who qualify to buy their home at a discounted price. For more info, visit RightToBuy.communities.gov.uk. ♦



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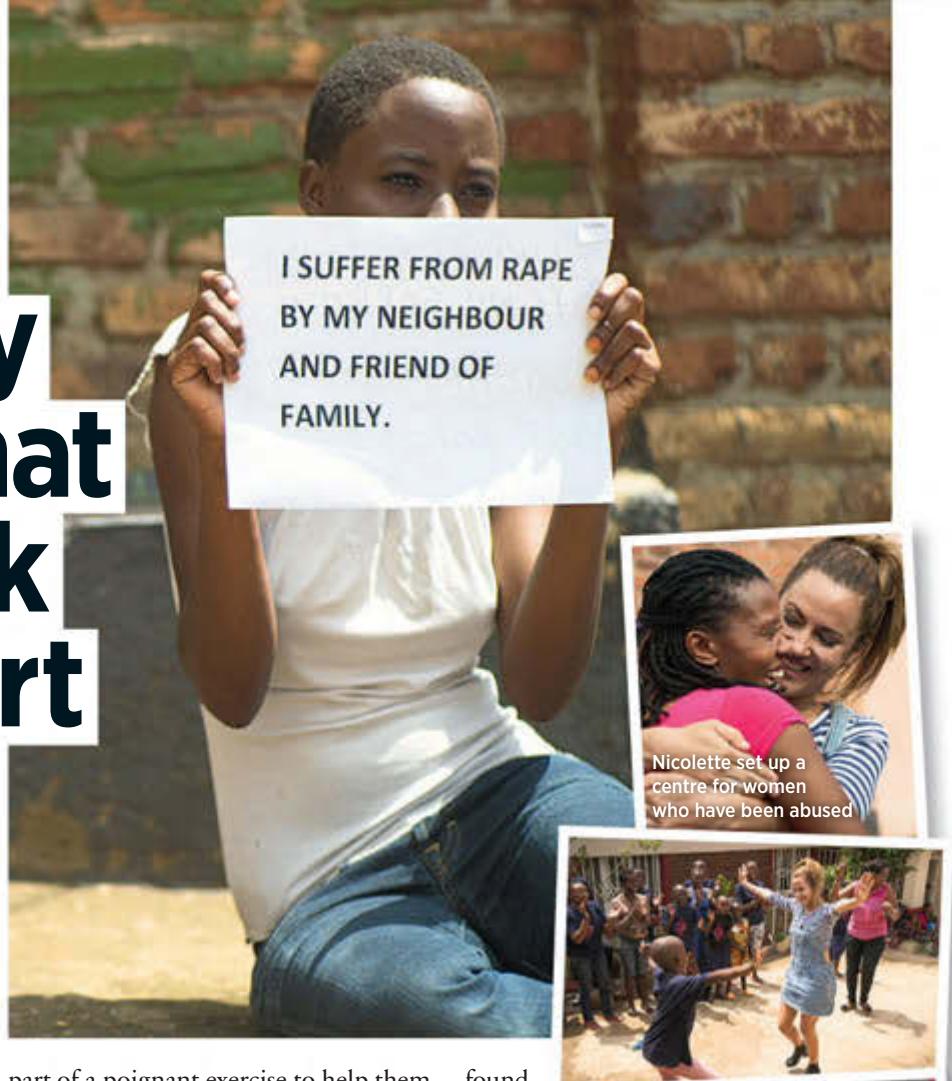
The Red Nose Day report that will break your heart

In the UK just 23% of MPs are women. In Rwanda it's 64% - the highest in the world - so why do one in five women there endure sexual violence? Caroline Flack reports for Cosmo

The daily reality for women in Kigali, Rwanda, couldn't be more different from that of TV presenter and *Strictly* winner Caroline Flack. She's used to the safety and glamour of TV studios, photoshoots and parties before returning to her cosy London home. But in Rwanda (where, despite progress in political representation, this is yet to have a significant impact on the lives of the poorest women), thousands live in poverty and fear of violence. Homeless and vulnerable women become involved in sex work as a means of survival and, as a result of the stigma, are isolated from society.

Centre Marembo was set up by 43-year-old Rwandan Nicolette Nsabimana and is run by UK-based charity Ryico. It provides a safe haven and education courses for those fleeing abuse. Caroline flew out to Rwanda to meet the women and find out how money raised for Comic Relief is helping to turn their lives around.

Caroline says: "When I arrived at the Centre the heat was scorching, but I felt chilled to my core. The girls were holding up signs with heartbreakingly messages about their experiences as



Nicolette set up a centre for women who have been abused



Marie-Jean was raped by a family 'friend'

part of a poignant exercise to help them recover from their abuse [see main picture]. One of them was Odette, 23. She was 15 when she fell pregnant after being raped by a neighbour and her family ostracised her. I thought about my own mum and my twin sister Jo who are always there for me – I couldn't imagine life without their support.

Odette had no one, but she was determined to give her baby boy a good life. She named him Bright in defiance of her bleak experiences and started working in a hotel. In a cruel twist of fate, a car accident then left her in a wheelchair. Odette faced an uncertain future until the Centre took her in. Finally, she had a family: 'I saw that people could love me,' she told me.

"Another was 16-year-old Marie-Jean. She gripped my hand as she described how, aged nine, she was raped by a family 'friend' who threatened to cut her tongue out if she told anyone. When her grandmother – her guardian – died, she

found work as a cleaner to make ends meet. But when she refused to sleep with her employer's husband he accused her of stealing and she was sent to a detention centre. She could have languished there indefinitely if Nicolette hadn't fought for her release.

"Meeting these amazing women, I felt in total awe and their strength left me speechless. Later I

watched Marie-Jean singing in the sunshine with the other girls; she'd finally found a place of safety where her confidence could grow.

YOU CAN HELP

As well as being a shelter, Centre Marembo offers free training courses including sewing, so that the women can earn a sustainable income for years to come. To find out how you can donate and get involved, watch Red Nose Day coverage on BBC on 13 March, and visit Rednoseday.com.

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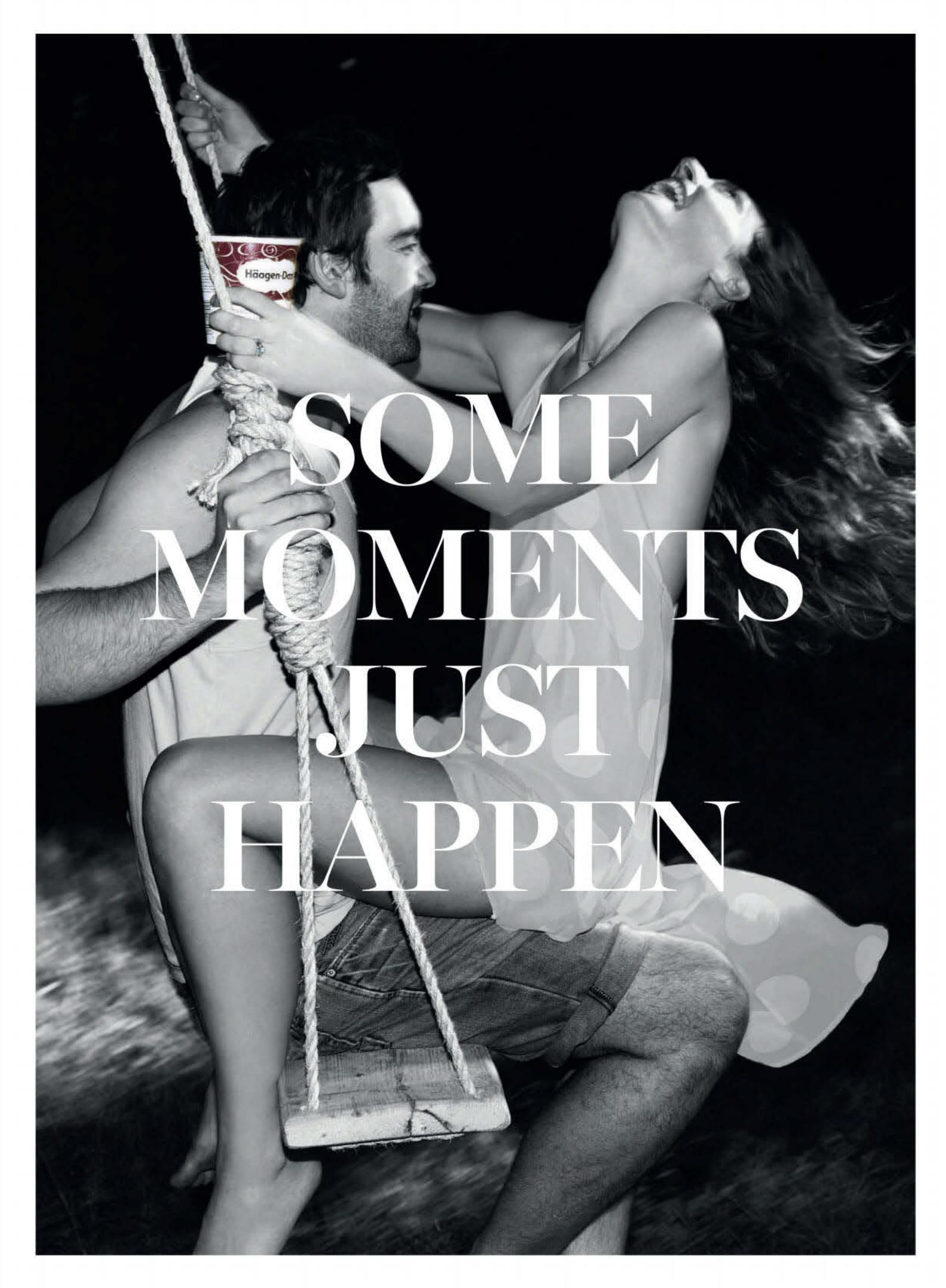
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NOTHING IS BETTER THAN REAL

Who has the



How you feel when you look in the mirror depends on where you are in the world. NATASHA DEVON discovers that when it comes to beauty, one size doesn't fit all



LOVE
YOUR
BODY

perfect body?

Everyone



A photograph of two women laughing and holding a Diet Coke can. One woman is wearing a sequined dress and the other is in a bikini. They are on a wooden deck overlooking a body of water.

Regret Nothing.

no sugar, no calories

Diet Coke

A

But while in Britain the celebrity shape women most aspire to is our covergirl Cameron Diaz's strong, lean figure, in other countries the bodies seen as desirable are often completely different. Around the world, what's thought of as 'perfect' can be influenced by everything from the economy to the food supply.

What is considered beautiful changes over time too. For example, in Jane Austen's *Pride And Prejudice*, Elizabeth Bennett is criticised for being 'too tanned' – in Austen's lifetime it would have signified she wasn't rich enough to spend all day sitting indoors doing cross stitch. But with the advent of air travel, a tan became a symbol of affluence, as only those with plenty of disposable income could afford to travel to sunny climes.

So what exactly determines 'beauty' – and what lengths will women across the globe go to in order to achieve what they perceive it to be? In honour of International Women's Day (8 March), I interviewed people from far-flung corners of our glorious planet (including *Cosmo* staff in different countries) and found out what beauty means to them.

India

In Britain, fake tan is a £100million industry, but in India, it's a *very* different story. Indians spend more on skin-whitening products than they do on Coca-Cola – a massive £312million per year – in the hope of emulating the pale complexion of Aishwarya Rai – the former Miss World described as the country's most beautiful woman. That's despite the terrifying risks of skin thinning, blotchiness and irritation.

The ideal body shape in India, according to *Cosmo* India Editor Meghna Sharma, is, "a lean build, with slightly curvy hips". Staying slim is seen by many as essential to success in life, with half of all females believing that being overweight will hold them back in the workplace, and 41% – higher than in any other country – saying that the prospect of promotion was a key motivation to lose weight.

typical British woman spends an average of £25,000 and 17 years on dieting. What's more, she loses and regains her body weight an average of nine times during her lifetime. Depressing, isn't it? Not to mention exhausting...

USA

Back in the '50s, American women longed for curves like those of Marilyn Monroe (who had a healthy body mass index, or BMI, of up to 22.9). Today's 'ideal' is tall, lean and super-toned, like Victoria's Secret models, whose teeny BMIs are around 17.5 – which is under the recommended range. With this incredibly narrow ideal to aspire to, it's no surprise that 80% of women in the States dislike their appearance, and many are having surgery to change it. There's been a 45% increase in breast enlargements since 2000. But America's main beauty obsession seems to be looking young, with Botox the most popular cosmetic treatment (around 5.7 million procedures are carried out each year). Women also spend over £4.6billion on makeup a year – which works out at around £66 a month per person.

China and Southeast Asia

Chinese culture places major value on 'femininity' in women – interpreted as being petite, slender and delicate. And it comes at a cost. More diet pills are consumed in China than in any other country: 37% of the population admit to taking them. Many believe that the

high instances of Asian girls suffering from body-image issues and eating disorders are the result of trying to live up to the stereotype that Asian women have naturally slim figures.

Skin whitening is a £1.3billion-a-year industry in China, and the quest for pale skin remains popular in other Asian countries, including Singapore and Vietnam. Elizabeth Lee, Senior Beauty Editor at *Cosmo* Singapore, says, "The fairer you look, the more beautiful you're perceived to be." But it's not just skin tone – also popular with teens in Tokyo are 'purikura' photo booths that, as well as brightening and smoothing skin, make users' eyes look bigger and more 'Westernised.'

Korea

There are more plastic-surgery procedures per head of population in Korea than in any other country. Of women aged 19-49 in Seoul (the capital), 20% have had cosmetic surgery, and even former Miss Korea Kim Yu-Mi admitted to having one of the most popular procedures – reducing excess skin in the upper eyelid to make eyes appear more 'Western'.

The pressure on Korean women to be slim is so high that more than half of girls at Korean high schools suffer >



anaemia because of dieting. But, says Hyang Jin Choi, Beauty Director at *Cosmo* Korea, change *is* happening – gradually. “A slim and lean body is usually assumed as the ideal body shape,” she says. “But nowadays, a body toned through working out is getting more popular.” Hopefully this will mark a welcome return to self-acceptance.

South America



It would be easy to assume that Brazil's beauty ideal is tall, lean and leggy, just like the country's most famous model, Gisele Bündchen. However, 83% of Brazilians think there's too much emphasis placed on being thin, and curves are becoming increasingly celebrated too. So much so, in fact, that many women are turning to surgery to try to attain their ‘ideal’ figure: Brazil now performs the most bottom implants and is second only to the US when it comes to breast implants.

Africa



Mauritania is facing an obesity crisis – but it's not one its women are worrying about. In countries where food is scarce, a curvaceous body is often seen as more attractive, as it's a sign of wealth (as well as sexual maturity, fertility and strength). While many of us are trying to maintain a healthy diet, in this west-African country, women are encouraged to eat as much as possible – even being sent to ‘fat camps’ to be fed 15,000 calories a day.

It's a similar story in other countries, including South Africa, where three-quarters of women are overweight (according to World Health Organisation criteria), but their curves are associated with beauty and sex appeal. As *Cosmo* South Africa's Laura Twiggs points out, “Our love affair with the bum far precedes the current celebrity mega-bum trend.” Something to think about if you've ever worried about your curves.

Middle East



More nose jobs are performed in Iran than any other country, with as many as 200,000 Iranians (mostly women) having the surgery each year. Some blame the numbers on compulsory abayas and hijabs, which hide women's figures and hair, meaning more focus is placed on the face. But here there are Muslim women

who believe this emphasis on modesty has a positive impact on their self-image. Hayat Rachi, 25, says, “Because we cover up *so* much, our culture doesn't focus on women's bodies, so women are often more confident.”

Over 75% of Arab women in the Middle East are classed as overweight and Kuwait is the number-one country in the world for obesity – with an average BMI of 31.4 for women. Only 2% of women in Saudi Arabia, and 6% in Bahrain exercise regularly. Still, around 75% of women believe their weight is ‘normal’ – suggesting they're perfectly happy with it.

Australia



Down Under, where physical activity is a way of life, the emphasis is on what women's bodies can *do* rather than how they look. Most Australians say they'd prefer eating more healthily and exercising over having any kind of cosmetic procedure – huzzah! “A fit and healthy build with toned arms and bottom is the ideal body shape,” explains Leigh Campbell, Beauty Director of *Cosmo* Australia. “Traditionally, Australian women are tanned or sun-kissed, with long, beachy hair.” It's a fuss-free approach, with 63% of Aussie girls saying they only change their look every couple of years, and most – 76% – having only two looks: ‘going out’ and their ‘regular look.’

Caribbean



A generously proportioned bottom and hips is seen as the most desirable attribute a Caribbean woman can have, as it's associated with happiness, prosperity and generosity. Big is beautiful, which is reflected in the fact that 40% of the Caribbean's adult population are overweight. In St Kitts, that figure is 78%, while in Jamaica it is standing at 65%, with the average BMI for women over recommended levels at 29.8.

But the desire for mega curves has sparked a dangerous trend among women in Jamaica. Thousands admit

to taking pills containing hormones that were originally developed to fatten up chickens, because they believe this will make their behinds more bootylicious – in spite of the associated risk of developing breast cancer.

Europe

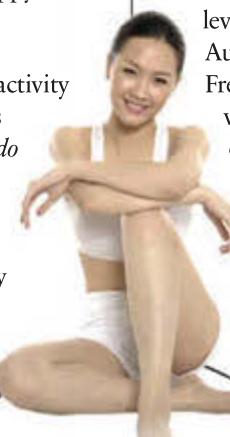


French women may pride themselves on never getting fat, but that determination carries huge pressures. Despite a proposed bill criminalising the promotion of ‘extreme thinness’ in the media, French women have the lowest average BMI in western Europe and the second-highest levels of anorexia in the world (after Austria). A report also found that French women worry about their weight the most, and only half of those who are underweight think they're too thin.

Thankfully, super-skinny isn't the goal everywhere:

Dutch women, who are the tallest in Europe and have an average waist of 32 inches, focus on being strong, rather than skinny. Dewi Lammerding, Deputy Editor for *Cosmo*

Netherlands says, “In Holland the ideal body shape is [one that] matches your natural figure. Fit and healthy really is the new skinny.”



The quest for pale skin remains popular in Asian countries such as China, Singapore and Vietnam

SO WHAT IS BEAUTY?

The thing I've discovered is that there's somewhere in the world where every single one of us would be regarded as beautiful. But perhaps the body we should all be working towards is one that houses a happy, confident mind. In a recent study, Jeetendr Sehdev – a professor at the University of Southern California – questioned more than 10,000 men and women around the world on what they think makes someone attractive. The results showed that qualities such as vulnerability, courage and individuality all ranked higher than ‘beauty’ in terms of overall importance, and traits including honesty, ambition and passion appeared in the top 10 too. Now, *that's* my kind of beauty. ♦

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MANTHROPOLOGY

KIP GAMBLIN

As Neighbours turns 30, Kip, who plays Brad Willis, joins our body-awareness campaign

"I used to be a classical ballet dancer and did quite a few 'revealing' photo shoots then, so I'm OK with being photographed like this. Plus, we've all got the same bits, you know? I look after myself; I do a bit of yoga, which is great, and uplifting too. Mental health is as important as physical.

But I dread doing pool or beach scenes in the middle of winter – I've had to film topless jogging scenes when it's freezing (yes, even in Melbourne) because our producers want people to see the 'Australian lifestyle'! But it's all part of the job, and the crew are great – some of them have been there years, and they worked with Kylie [Minogue] and Jason [Donovan]. They soon put us back in our place if we're divas!"

• *Neighbours* is on weekdays: 1.45pm and 5.30pm, Channel 5

• Testicular cancer is the most common cancer in twenty-something men, but is curable if found early.

Research shows men are less likely to have health checks than women, so remind the men in your life to check their bits regularly for lumps.



IN ASSOCIATION WITH



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Work it

"What's that guy's name? John? James something? Remember to send him that thing we were gonna send him." *Margaret, 28*

"So you must not be dating lately – you haven't been coming to work hung-over." *Kim, 25*

"I should be back in about an hour. Maybe longer if I get full highlights instead of partial ones this time." *Erin, 26*

"Let's meet on Friday at 5:30pm to go over next month's budget." *Becca, 26*

"I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M SAYING THIS, BUT GOOD JOB." *Ariel, 23*

"If you look in my office and see me drooling at my desk, do me a favour and wake me up, please." *Elizabeth, 21*

"When I was your age, I didn't have health insurance either. You'll live." *Jen, 27*

"So it turns out you didn't need to create that manual after all. But it wasn't a total waste of time, because you probably learnt something." *Brett, 32*

"Why does everything have to be about money with you?" *Colleen, 27*

"How do you spell 'tomorrow'?" *Heather, 23*

"I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND YOUR MEMO, SO I JUST THREW IT OUT." *Erica, 22*



"I don't want to catch whatever it is you have right before my holiday, so I got you this mask to wear until that cough goes away." *Alex, 26*

"I know that's your night off, but I'm going to need you to come in... What? Oh, guys don't care about their birthday; just plan his party for another night." *Claire, 24*

"Do you know your right from left?

No, seriously, if you don't, we can get you some help with it." *Denise, 23*

"I think this milk is bad. Will you taste it and let me know?" *Essie, 26*

"After much consideration, I've decided to allow jeggings in the office on Fridays. You're welcome." *Leila, 26*

"The one good thing about this company is... uh, I'm thinking..." *Tracy, 28*

"If something's really important, don't put it in my inbox. It will never see the light of day." *Lydia, 27*

"My emails can have typos in them because I'm a genius." *Anna, 25*

"Can someone please tell me what I'm supposed to be doing today?" *Jazmine, 20*

"Is your nail polish chipped? We cannot have that." *Christine, 18*

YOUR BOSS SAID what?!

Apparently, these readers' managers didn't get the memo that some moments just call for silence...

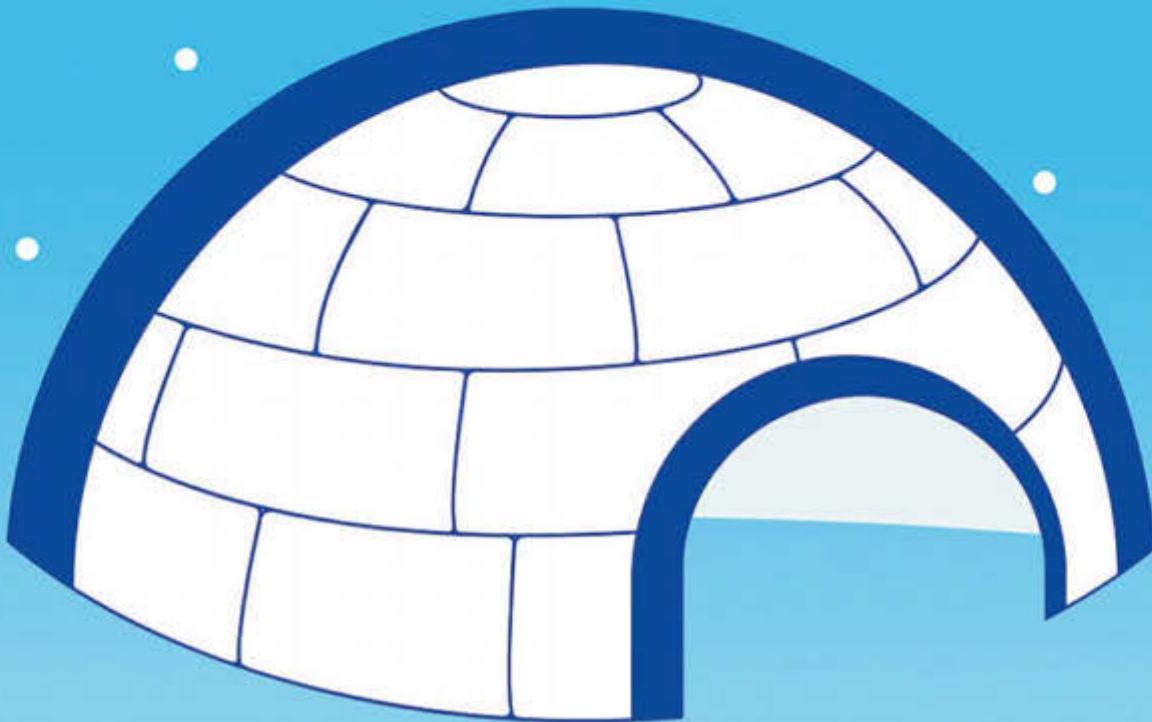
"I need you to finish this before you go, but don't feel like you have to stay super-late tonight." *Veronica, 22*

"I'M THINKING ABOUT JOINING THE FACE BOOK." *Noel, 34*

"I know I said you'd get a bonus every time you hit your sales goal, but you hit it a lot, so I'm going to have to change that policy." *Greta, 24*

"Is my presentation for tomorrow's meeting done yet?" *Claudia, 25*

"Fingers crossed – this is your weekend to hook a guy." *Lisa, 25*



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Karren Brady's

CAREER CLINIC



SHE'S ALAN SUGAR'S RIGHT-HAND WOMAN ON *THE APPRENTICE*, A BARONESS AT THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND VICE-CHAIRMAN OF WEST HAM UNITED TOO. WITH THIS MUCH EXPERIENCE UNDER HER BELT, ALL-ROUND SUPERSTAR BUSINESSWOMAN KAREN BRADY WAS THE IDEAL CANDIDATE TO GUEST-EDIT OUR CAREERS SECTION

KB

Welcome to my first-ever guest edit of *Cosmo's Work It* section – your inspiring guide to owning your career. When we were brainstorming about what I could discuss on these pages, talk turned to mentoring, and it struck me that the term itself – ‘mentor’ – sounds quite dated, tired and even a bit intimidating. Day-to-day, and in my role as a Pantene Pro-V #shinestrong ambassador (empowering women to achieve their ambitions), I see a lot of confusion about what it means too. Often, people mistake mentoring for having superstar role models such as Oprah Winfrey to look up to.

Great though that is, for most people it's not particularly helpful. Mentoring is simply about having access to helpful advice and support on a regular basis from people in your workplace or industry who have more experience than you. It's about somebody taking you under their wing and giving you guidance on how to succeed, or introducing you to others who can help, simply because they've been there already.

At different times in my life I've had plenty of mentors who've really helped me, but one who stands out is one of my secondary-school teachers – she was brilliant and hugely influential. While too many young girls at school find themselves playing dumb – particularly in front of boys – she taught me the power of knowledge, that I was good at learning and how rewarding it felt to be good at something.

Not everybody is lucky enough to have that person in the workplace, so over the next few pages, I'll be speed-mentoring you on the things I've found helpful in my career. First, we'll talk CVs, interviews and how to progress at work, then we'll discuss productivity and how to squeeze the most from every single day, whether you're working flat-out in a full-time corporate job or hoping to run your own business at home. Finally, I'll show you how to sell yourself effectively – something many women really struggle with.

I hope that with my help, the next few pages inspire you to get out there to achieve your true potential, and to offer your help to people lower down the career ladder too. Never feel like you don't have enough experience to make an impact on somebody else. Let me know how you get on at questionforkarren@hearst.co.uk.

Karren X

The advice I'll never forget

1 Don't look down on people, unless you're helping them up.

That's something my grandmother used to say, and it's a really important part of who I am. Helping others to be successful and imparting my knowledge as best I can is crucial. I like to see other people do well.

2 If you don't champion yourself in your career, no one else will. Never be afraid to speak about your accomplishments in interviews, and don't shy away from opportunities because you feel unqualified. It's important to know your worth – it will pay off.

3 Find your niche. As an employer, I admire people who have a strong sense of who they are. Whether you're looking for a new job, trying to climb the ladder internally or aiming to go it alone, find your USP. What sets you apart from everybody else? What can you bring to the table that nobody else can? Start with that and you'll go far. >

TRY IT NOW

"IT'S TRULY AMAZING"

Denise W, Telford



"NEVER TASTED ANYTHING AS GOOD"

Carol W, Bolton



"A REAL WINNER"

Connie M, Glasgow



"IT'S HEAVEN ON A SPOON"

Angela W, Stockport



"SO CREAMY IT'S SHEER BLISS"

Nicole S, home Hawaii, heart London



How to #WIN AT WORK



In my monthly Cosmo column, the questions I'm asked most often are about CVs, interviews and promotions. So I invited three readers – who were all struggling in the workplace – to my Career Clinic in order to tackle those tricky topics.

'MY CV IS LETTING ME DOWN'

BUNMI AFUYE, 22, FROM LONDON, IS CURRENTLY UNEMPLOYED



B: I'm desperate to work in fashion PR, but rarely get a reply when I apply for jobs. I think I need a better CV.

KB: My first tip is clear out all the bumf – for example, I don't care that you've got a clean driving licence; it's not relevant to a job in fashion PR. I'll probably glance at a CV for 10 seconds, and if my interest isn't held I'll discard it.

B: Really? That's pretty surprising! How long should my CV be?

KB: If you have enough experience to fill two sides, use it – if not, just one page is better. Spelling is crucial too, and use nice paper.

B: So what do I actually need to include

to get employers' attention?

KB: First, make a list of everything you've ever done so you don't forget anything – every job, successful task or project you've been responsible for. Then, when writing your CV, ask yourself what's relevant. Start with an opening statement that explains who you are and what you do. What sets you apart? Next, when it comes to explaining each role, I want to hear language like, 'I've created/conducted/organised...' Take ownership of everything you've done and use bullet points to list your achievements. Delete anything obviously irrelevant – you've written that your previous role at nursery school involved checking toilet habits, but nobody wants to hear that!

B: I just assumed I had to list everything I'd ever done.

'I'M TERRIFIED OF INTERVIEWS!'

KATIE JOHNSON, 23, FROM LEEDS, IS AN EVENTS ASSISTANT



K: At a recent job interview, I was told my answers weren't good enough.

KB: Firstly, call the interviewer and say you'd appreciate it if they could spare you some time. Ask specific questions, such as, 'What didn't you like about my answers?' Tell them to be blunt.

K: Maybe I was too nervous.

KB: Don't let that put you off. You're going to experience defeat – it's how you learn from it that's important. When I was 16, I applied for a job stacking shelves and was turned down – but I moved on.

K: How do I give off the right signals?

KB: Dress smartly. If you can look after yourself it shows you can look after your work too. Bring a pen, notebook, your CV and any relevant work with you, turn your phone off and be ready to engage with the interviewer.

K: I'm worried it's my personality...

KB: Are you acting confidently? You could have done that job but somehow, you failed to communicate that. Did you *really* want it?

K: Actually, I'm not sure.

KB: You need to show you're ready to hit the ground running. In my book, enthusiasm is more important than qualifications – if you're not brimming with passion it's not going to work. Did you research the company?

K: I guess I could have prepared more.

KB: This is key. Think about what the company is currently doing and its mission statement, and drop your knowledge into conversation to show you're interested. And *always* follow up. Say how great it was to meet the interviewer, thank them for their time and reiterate how keen you are. >

'Dress smartly. If you can look after yourself it shows you can look after your work too'

KB: No, it's important to tailor your CV to the specific skill sets for each job. Trim down anything old or irrelevant. Put your experience in fashion retail and at London Fashion Week right at the top, so that's what your interviewer sees first.

B: Should I add a photo?

KB: Fashion's a very visual industry, so you could send a photo of yourself in action at LFW – looking groomed, approachable and friendly.

B: What about the 'skills' section – do employers care about that?

KB: Absolutely. Make the most of this section. I can see you've listed the computer programs you're comfortable using (such as Photoshop and InDesign), but don't just list them. Write, 'I use Photoshop on a *daily* basis.' And finally, mention your blog – it's something you're passionate about, and that really needs to shine through.



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FIND YOUR FAVOURITE



'HOW DO I GET A PROMOTION?'

GEORGINA O'CALLAGHAN, 25, FROM MANCHESTER, IS A SALES ADVISER AT A HIGH-STREET RETAILER

G: I've worked in retail since I was 17 and I'm desperate to progress to management level, but I can't seem to make the jump.

KB: Have you put yourself forward?

G: Yes – but when I went for one job recently I didn't get it because another candidate had more experience than me. I'm also worried it looks bad because I don't have a degree in retail.

KB: Lots of people who work for me don't have degrees, and I don't either! If you don't have a strong work ethic, a degree isn't worth a thing. If it's something you're *desperate* for, look into part-time options while working. If not, upskill – find something at college



that'll supplement your retail skills. When you went for the job, what feedback did you get?

G: I was told I lack experience with responsibility.

KB: In future, make it clear you can handle responsibility by filling in for people. Offer to cover your supervisor's role when they're next away.

G: One concern is that I've recently been transferred from a tiny store with 14 employees to a huge flagship store with 140. It's hard to stand out!

KB: If you're feeling overwhelmed, try to find a mentor – somebody you work closely with who can impart their knowledge. They can also make you aware of promotions and vouch for you.

G: I think it's a confidence thing too.

KB: Don't let a bad result put you off in future – you need to develop a thick skin. The key to getting a promotion is doing the job you have really well, and going above and beyond what's expected of you.

Be the QUEEN of PRODUCTIVITY



"My biggest secret to getting everything done? Organisation – plain and simple.

But that doesn't mean covering your desk in Post-its.

This is the advice you need to follow if you ever feel like there aren't enough hours in the day."

1 FRONT-LOAD

"Leaving things hanging means you'll put them off longer," says Karren. So schedule those tricky meetings for first thing in the morning. According to Canadian research, willpower is a finite resource, so if you use it all up on a less important task, you're less likely to do well on other work. Meaning? Start with the jobs that require the most attention and concentration and you'll see the best results.

"Think of it like ripping off a plaster," Karren adds. "It's never as bad as you think. And prioritising makes you far more productive in the long run."

2 SET SPECIFIC GOALS

According to a study of a class of Harvard Business School students, the 13% of them who'd set themselves general career goals while at uni were earning twice as much 10 years later as the 84% who hadn't set any goals. And the 3% who had clear, written goals were earning 10 times as much as the other 97% put together. Impressive. But it pays to keep quiet – people who talk

openly about their goals are less likely to achieve them.

"Try using the 'SMART' technique," suggests Clare Evans, author of *Time Management For Dummies*. "S = Specific (is your goal focused and unambiguous?); M = Measurable (can you determine whether you've achieved it?); A = Action-orientated (what action does this require?); R = Realistic (can you actually do it?) and T = Time-bound (what's your deadline?)".

3 KNOW WHEN TO DELEGATE

Don't be a martyr who won't let anybody help with *anything*. The average employee spends 19% of their time doing administrative tasks, but that increases the higher up the ladder you climb. The answer? Delegate to free up your time for the big things.

"Delegating is a smarter way of working that stops you suffering from burnout," says Karren. "But

that doesn't mean you don't have any input – I always check work before anything's signed off. Just make the objective clear when passing over responsibility, specify the desired results, ask for

progress reports if you're nervous and give a clear deadline."

4 DO ONE THING AT A TIME

It's scientifically proven that our brains aren't equipped to switch between tasks efficiently – it's far more effective to do one thing at a time. Constantly flipping between emails, phone calls and documents means you're working at a much slower pace. Studies also indicate that we retain less information when multitasking too.

"Make a list of the most important things you have to tackle and then number them in order of urgency,"

says Rachael Sutherland from time-management website Timeetc.co.uk. “Turn off your email, Facebook, WhatsApp and other social-media notifications and check them once an hour, at most. 75% of high-earning workers think it’s inappropriate to read texts or emails during formal meetings (even if it’s relevant to the meeting) too. Give everything your undivided attention and you’ll see better results.”

5

SWITCH YOUR MINDSET

Another meeting where you’re not remotely prepared? According to a new study, we view negotiations or meetings as either a ‘threat’ or a ‘challenge’. Those who view them as threats experience greater stress, and make worse decisions, but viewing them as challenges results in greater success.

“If you’re panicking about upcoming meetings, it’s a sign that you need to prepare better – be proactive rather than reactive,” says Clare. “Too stretched to prepare at all? Then do you *have* to say yes? If you’re experiencing conflicting demands, be vocal about your workload – it’s better to be honest than mess up the task.”

6

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

When we’re trying to meet a target or complete work to a deadline, focusing on how far we’ve already come means we feel a premature sense of accomplishment and begin to slack off. In one study, college students revising for an exam were significantly more motivated to study after being told they had 52% of the material left to go, compared with being told they’d already done 48%.

“The key to staying motivated is constantly reassessing your goals and giving yourself things to work towards – whether that’s an awesome holiday or a financial target at work,” advises Clare. “But always break tasks down into manageable parts so they don’t become overwhelming.”

How to SELL YOURSELF (WITHOUT SOUNDING ARROGANT...)



“Most people I meet don’t grasp the fact that landing your dream job is all about sales – and you are the commodity. Here, I’ve enlisted a team of experts to share the most effective ways of marketing ‘product you’”

IN WRITING

★ **Always use ‘key’ words** “The majority of recruitment agencies and large companies use an ATS (applicant tracking system) to store candidates’ CVs,” explains Victoria McLean, managing director of Citycv.co.uk. “So, be savvy. If you don’t include the key words or phrases a recruitment consultant would type in to find candidates (such as ‘financial controller’), your CV won’t even get seen by a human.”

★ **Design isn’t everything** “Similarly, most ATS can’t read text in tables, so stick to a really simple CV format.”

★ **Interest me** “Never list shopping or socialising as interests. Things like marathon running, netball or charity work all demonstrate core skills like teamwork, integrity and dedication,” says Victoria. “This is a great place to sneak in accomplishments without looking boastful. Think about your language too – being an ‘enthusiastic team player’ might be appropriate when you’re 20, but at 30 it’s probably less relevant.”

IN PERSON

★ **Watch your language** “Phrases like, ‘It’s not fair,’ or, ‘I’m so busy,’ are critical,

competitive statements, which get people’s backs up,” says behavioural psychologist Jo Hemmings.

★ **Ditch the ‘blue-sky thinking’** “It’s easy to pick up office jargon without realising,” says Jo. “But most jargon is vague and meaningless, and leads to miscommunication.”

★ **Pitch yourself carefully** “Keeping your voice at a low pitch makes you appear more stable,” explains body-language expert Professor Patrick O’Donnell from the University of Glasgow. “The qualities that make somebody appear reliable and trustworthy are emotional stability, mild extroversion and dominance, and conscientiousness. Letting your voice drift too high suggests the opposite qualities.”

★ **Save the smiles** “Smiling shows you can relate to other people. But smiling *too* often can be seen as a weakness – it suggests a need to fit in and be liked,” says Patrick.

ONLINE

★ **Be consistent** “If you’re trying to build a presence online, consistency builds trust,” says Irina Kondrashova, strategy director at digital marketing agency 360i London. “You want employers to see you as reliable and trustworthy, not as somebody who tweets 20 times one day, then goes offline for a month. Quality is crucial too – I’d hire someone who shares interesting content once a week over somebody who constantly updates generic, bland information.”

★ **Timing is everything** “If you’re sharing content online that you want potential employers or contacts to see, think about the time of your updates – are they likely to see it at 11am on a Monday? Doubtful,” says Irina.

★ **Be selective** “Be careful about who you connect with,” advises LA Ronayne, digital creative director at digital marketing agency Havas Work Club. “And pick your platform carefully – will LinkedIn be *that* useful for you? Or would a more visual platform such as Instagram be more effective?” ♦

Pantene set up a £20,000 #shinestrong fund to give women practical help towards achieving their career dreams. For more information, visit Pantene.co.uk.



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IMAGE ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

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Top, £89; jeans, £129,
both Guess. Shoes (just
seen), £490, Mulberry.
Bracelet, £85, Paula
Bostock at PB
Jewellery. Necklace,
£195, Alex Monroe ➤

love child

Dreamy denim, fringed suede and the prettiest little tops to while away weekends in. Float on...



FASHION SHELLY VELLA * PHOTOGRAPHS MARK CANT



THIS PAGE

Coat, £350, Jigsaw.
Top, £129, Antik Batik.
Shorts, £62, Somedays Lovin. Necklaces, from £195, Alex Monroe

OPPOSITE PAGE

Top, £180, Michael Michael Kors. Jeans, £39.99, H&M Studio. Bag, £2,355; bracelets, £500 each, all Chanel ▶





THIS PAGE
Dress, £345; bag, £184,
both Antik Batik, Jeans,
£68, Somedays Lovin.
Sovereign necklaces, from
£200, Rachel Entwistle.
Other necklaces, from
£195, Alex Monroe

OPPOSITE PAGE
Dress, £45, Miss Selfridge.
Bracelets, from £85,
Paula Bostock at PB
Jewellery ↗



THIS PAGE

Waistcoat, £49, Monsoon.
Top, £32, Minkpink. Shorts,
£250, Just Cavalli. Long
necklace, £140; bracelet,
£85, both Paula Bostock
at PB Jewellery. Other
necklaces, as before,
Alex Monroe

OPPOSITE PAGE

Kimono, £65, Miss Selfridge.
Waistcoat, £39, White Isle
at Monsoon. Vest, £32,
Accessorize. Necklaces and
bracelets, as before ➤









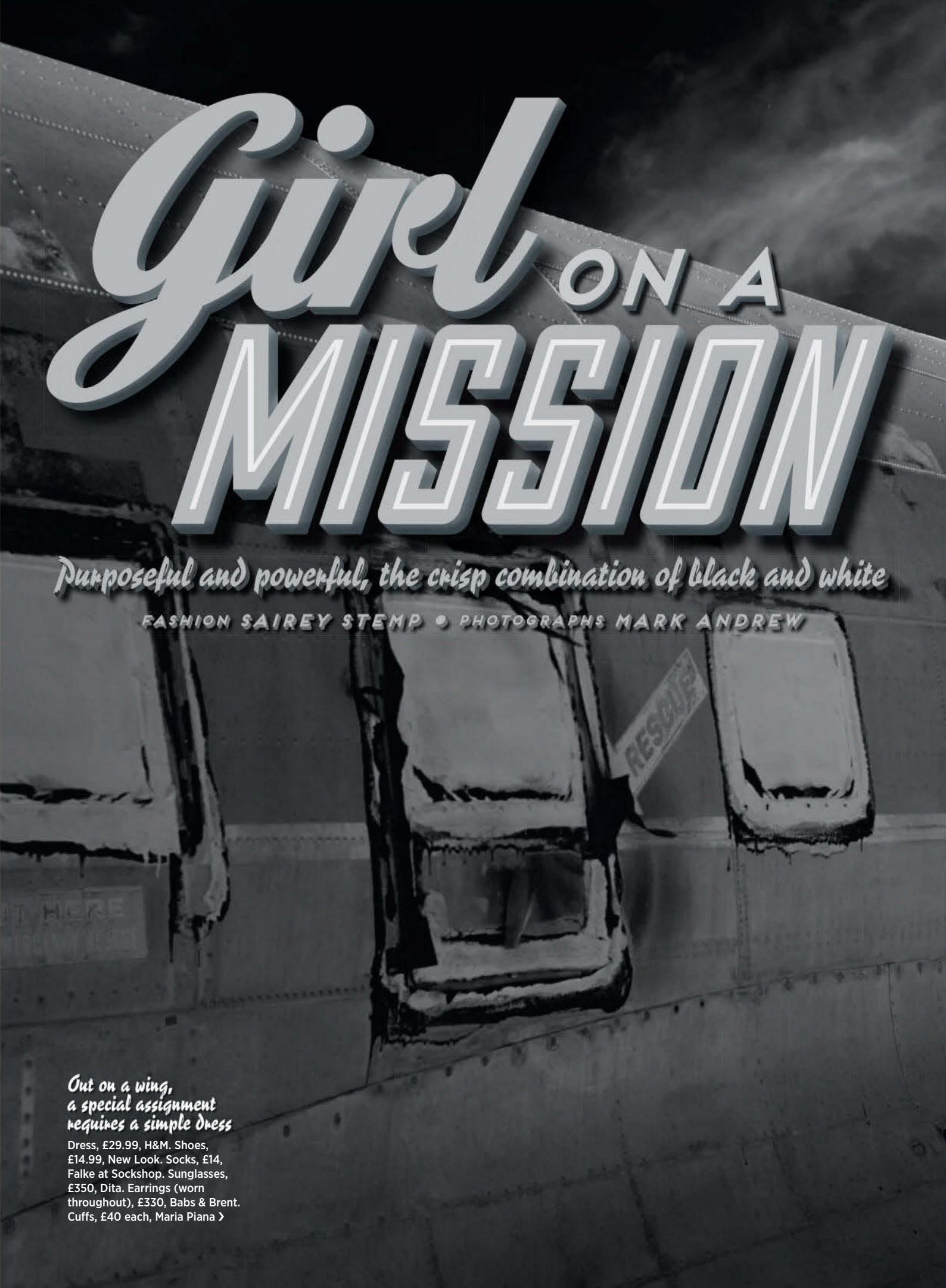
OPPOSITE PAGE:
Poncho, £305, Maje.
Skirt, £445; bag, £595,
both Coach. Necklaces,
as before

THIS PAGE:
Jacket, £80, New Look.
Top, £28, River Island.
Jeans, £329, Citizens
Of Humanity. Belt, £18,
Accessorize. Necklace,
as before

Hair Heath Massi at
Frank Agency, using
Hair Rehab London.
Makeup Lisa Valencia
at Carol Hayes, using
Bobbi Brown.
Model Amanda at
Milk Management.
Fashion Coordinator
Holly Coopey.
With thanks to
Kuramathi Island
Resort, Maldives,
Kuramathi.com.

Go behind the scenes
at Cosmopolitan.
co.uk/travel

girl ON A **MISSION**



Purposeful and powerful, the crisp combination of black and white

FASHION SAIREY STEMP • PHOTOGRAPHS MARK ANDREW

*Out on a wing,
a special assignment
requires a simple dress*

Dress, £29.99, H&M. Shoes,
£14.99, New Look. Socks, £14,
Falke at Sockshop. Sunglasses,
£350, Dita. Earrings (worn
throughout), £330, Babs & Brent.
Cuffs, £40 each, Maria Piana ▶





Toughen a striped sundress with mean, boyish lace-ups

Dress, £39.99, New Look.
Shoes, £120, Underground.
Socks, as before. Necklace,
£145, Pebble London



*Using a prop as
a prop in a retro
halter jumpsuit*

Jumpsuit, £130; shoes,
£160, both Whistles.
Ring, £86, Babs & Brent.
Bracelets, from £15,
Pebble London >



Surveying the surrounding territory in matching checks

Top, £69; skirt, £89,
both Hobbs. Shoes, £120,
Underground. Socks, £14,
Falke. Necklace, £25,
Freedom at Topshop. Cuff,
£80, Maria Piana



Power-walk your way forward in a graphic-print organza dress

Dress, £795, Issa.
Shoes, £140, F-Troupe.
Earrings, £330; ring
£86, both Babs & Brent.
Cuff, £60, Maria Piana

Casing out the landscape in big, bold spots

Top, £155; shorts, £165,
both Edit. Shoes, £119, La
Paire. Necklace, £35, Tatty
Devine. Watch, £150,
Pocket-watch.com. Cuffs,
From £25, Pebble London ➤



THIS PAGE

*Ascending to new
heights in a simple
button-through
shirtdress*

Dress, £73, Bardot. Shoes,
£140, F-Troupe. Socks,
£14, Falke. Necklace,
£135, Tatty Devine

OPPOSITE PAGE

*Look sundown
sleek in a slick
cropped jacket and
leather leggings*

Jacket, £396; bra top,
£196, both Rebecca Minkoff.
Trousers, £429.95, Gestuz.
Sunglasses, £65, Vow

Hair Noah Hatton for
Redken/Cutler at Judy Casey.
Makeup Regine Thorre.
Nails Calgel and IZ
Beauty of London.
Model Rachel Alexander
at Supreme Management.





Jacket, £795; top,
£495; skirt, £595, all
Mother Of Pearl.
Shoes, £160, French
Sole. Sunglasses,
£255, Miu Miu at
David Clulow >





PLAIN SAILING

The rules are, there are no rules. Mix, clash and have fun with the season's prints

FASHION *Shelly Vella* ☀ PHOTOGRAPHS *Mark Cant*

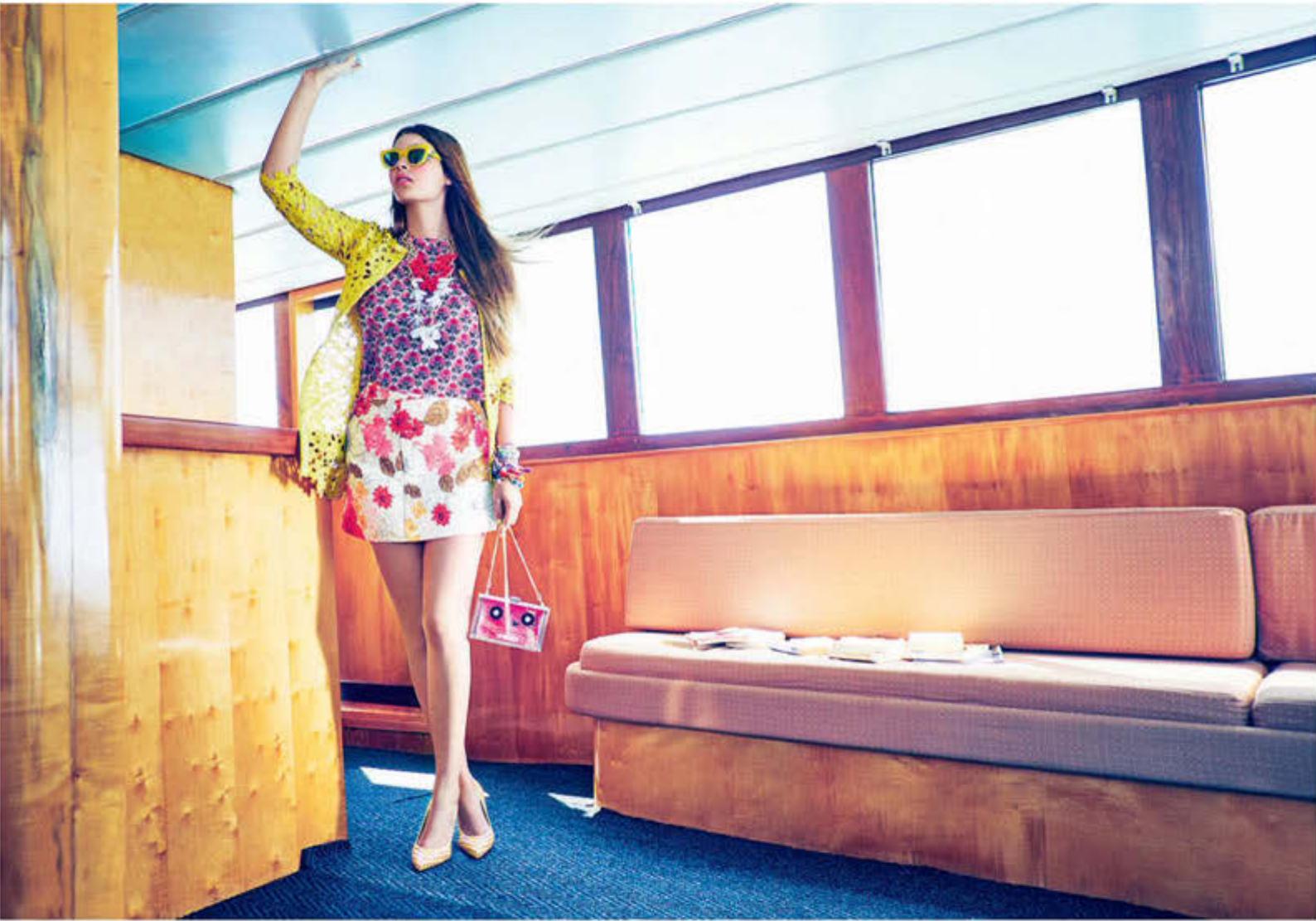




Jacket, £729; bag, £320,
both M Missoni. Top, £75;
trousers, £117, both Antik
Batik. Necklace, £25, Freedom
at Topshop. Bracelets, from
£36, Dana Levy



Jacket, £179; dress, £89;
shoes, £119, all Boden.
Sunglasses, £12, Accessorize.
Necklace, £480, Shorouk
at Cadenza >



Jacket, £79, Darling. Top, £32; skirt, £55, both Oasis. Shoes, £259, Ursula Mascaró. Sunglasses, £25, Quay Eyewear. Bag, £20, Asos. Necklaces, £14.50 each, Freedom at Topshop. Bracelets, from £36, Dana Levy



Top, £239; trousers, £199;
bag, £139, all Orla Kiely.
Shoes, £575, Christian
Louboutin. Sunglasses,
£179, Wildfox >



Jacket, £305, Paul & Joe Sister. Dress, £150, Topshop Unique. Sunglasses, £201, Miu Miu at Sunglasses Shop. Bag, £425, Coach. Rings, from £68, Lola Rose



Coat, £699; dress, £250, both
Karen Millen. Bag, £32, Next >



Shirt, £109, Baum Und Pferdgarten. Top, £30; culottes, £39, both Miss Selfridge. Sunglasses, £236, Chanel at Sunglasses Shop. Ring, model's own



Top, £30; trousers, £38,
both Oasis. Shoes, £45, Asos.
Bag, £30, Aldo. Bracelets,
from £36, Dana Levy

Hair Heath Massi at Frank Agency, using Hair Rehab London. Makeup Lisa Valencia at Carol Hayes, using Bare Minerals. Model Isabelle at Milk Management. Fashion Coordinator Holly Coopey. With thanks to Kuramathi Island Resort, Maldives, Kuramathi.com. Go behind the scenes at Cosmopolitan.co.uk/travel

The edit

THE SPRING SHOE FEST

From hot heels to stylish flats and everything in-between, we've got this season's footwear trends sorted





Block heels

*Put your best shoe forward
- just make sure it's chunky*





Pastels

Treat your feet to some sugary-sweet tones this season



Spots and stripes

Go dotty with super spots and graphic stripes for a bit of fun



Fringing and tassels

Make an impact with cool embellishments

GAME, SET, MATCH!

Classic court style has never been so cool, and this season the Lacoste sneaker is all you need for effortless style ...



Lacoste Ziane trainers,
£50, Schuh (available
in sizes 3-8)

Who needs heels? Feel confident and chic without compromising on comfort with a new wardrobe hero from iconic brand Lacoste.

The sports-luxe trend is here to stay, and a great way to inject sporting elegance into your wardrobe is with the Ziane sneaker, inspired by Lacoste's sporting heritage. Look effortlessly stylish on *and* off the court in classic two-tone trainers – and with a variety of colours available, you can sport (get it?) a different pair every day.

LACOSTE 

LOVE
YOUR
BODY

Catwalk to curvy

MAKE THE
SPRING/SUMMER
TRENDS WORK
FOR YOU

Love this season's catwalk looks? Laura Puddy knows how to tailor them to your body

Figuring out how to translate new trends into your own wardrobe can be tricky. Here are the S/S looks that flatter *your* shape...

TREND '70s**Flatters: busty or bottom-heavy shapes**

Flares and boho styling are made for curvy bodies. Flares elongate legs and create balance by drawing the eye in and out. A floaty maxi will disguise problem areas while highlighting ones you love. Top heavy? Go for a shirt-style maxi unbuttoned at the neck to accommodate your bust.

TREND Denim**Flatters: everyone!**

From ripped jeans to fitted jackets, the only rule this season is to stick to blue. If you're an hourglass, fitted pieces work best; highlight your waist with shirt dresses, high-waisted jeans or a pencil skirt like I'm wearing here. If you've got curvy hips, fit-and-flare dresses will streamline your shape. For a thicker middle, wear different tones on top and bottom to create definition.

TREND Florals**Flatters: lumps and bumps**

Head-to-toe florals might sound daunting, but it's



Laura wears:
T-shirt, £18,
American Apparel.
Skirt, £25, Boohoo.
Shoes and
jewellery,
Laura's own

really effective for disguising lumps and bumps. Floaty maxis elongate your figure while form-fitting styles are perfect for showing off your shape. Try a matching two-piece (a skirt-and-top or jacket-and-shorts combo) to really define your waist.

TREND Utility**Flatters: your tummy**

Think neutral tones, big pockets and military-inspired tailoring. This trend's boxy shapes work well if you carry weight around your middle and need definition. Avoid oversized styles though, as they'll only add volume. If you're bigger on the bottom, a thigh-skimming, tailored sleeveless jacket is a must. To create a waist, opt for a parka-style jacket that tapers in, or a belted trench.

TREND Suede & leather**Flatters: hourglasses**

These are S/S15's key fabrics. A chic suede pencil skirt will contour your hips, while leather jackets are the perfect cool arm cover-up.

TREND White**Flatters: pear shapes**

Don't be scared – get it right and white will flatter your assets. The trick is not to go all out, but to use it as a highlight. So if you're bigger on the bottom half, wear a white top with denim to keep the focus on the smaller part of your body, and vice versa.

HANDLE WITH CARE...

Wide legs Super-wide styles can add width and make your thighs look larger.

Fringing Better kept to accessories only.

Culottes Finding the right fabric and fit is key, as culottes can highlight a larger bottom half.

Key pieces

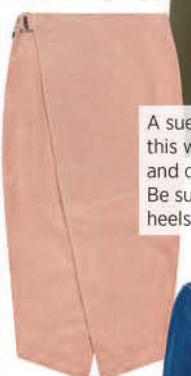
Well-cut flares will balance and streamline your figure. Jeans, £39.50, Per Una at Marks & Spencer



Retro-inspired prints are a new take on the florals trend – this maxi is excellent for bigger busts. Dress, £60, Wallis



Nod to utility styling with this boxy jacket – genius for creating a waist. Jacket, £38, Dorothy Perkins



A suede pencil skirt like this will hug your shape and define your waist. Be sure to wear it with heels. Skirt, £70, Asos



This fitted denim jacket was made for hourglasses. Jacket, £38, Red Herring at Debenhams



Tassels are a must for accessories. Bag, £58, Next



Platforms are the shoe of the season. These nude numbers will make your legs appear slimmer. Shoes, £65, Office

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Barry M

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QUICK DRY

9 Spring
Shades

Innovative
NEW
flat brush

QUICK DRY

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Catwalk TO COSMO

This season's sports-luxe trend – without a gym in sight

SPORTY STYLE



Jacket,
£264,
Essentiel



Visor, £75, Montreal London
at Net-A-Sporter



Sweatshirt, £162,
American Retro at
Urban Outfitters



Shoes,
£135,
Senso



Dress, £225,
L'Etoile Sport at
Net-A-Sporter

1
Designer style

Dress, £239,
Maje. Shoes,
£595, Rupert
Sanderson

PRABAL GURUNG



TOPSHOP UNIQUE

3.1 PHILLIP LIM

CHECK OUT OUR STYLE STEALS OVER THE PAGE

Instaglam

Style steals

Dress, £145, Karen Millen. Shoes, £68, Office. Clutch, £29.99, New Look



Top, £16, Next. Ear cuff, £15.99, Zara. Ring/bracelet, £14.50, Freedom at Topshop

PS - game on! Ace your spring look with shiny metallic brights and super-cool mesh. Mix primary colours for a bold statement look, or try sporty mesh fabrics. Keep hair sleek and add a simple ear cuff or chunky bracelet to take your look from day to night.



Top, £65, Topshop Unique



Bag, £22.50, Marks & Spencer



Shoes, £40, Office ♦

ASHLEY SMITH #MODERNVAGABOND



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Crafted with passion by our Lindt Master Chocolatier.



1



£22,
Asos



2

£165, LK
Bennett

3

£65,
Hobbs



5

£64.95,
Joules

6

£215,
Rebecca
Taylor



Shirts

*Fix up, look sharp in
a shirt for spring*

8

£55,
Coast



9

£17.99,
New Look

7

£29,
Fearne
Cotton at
Very



10

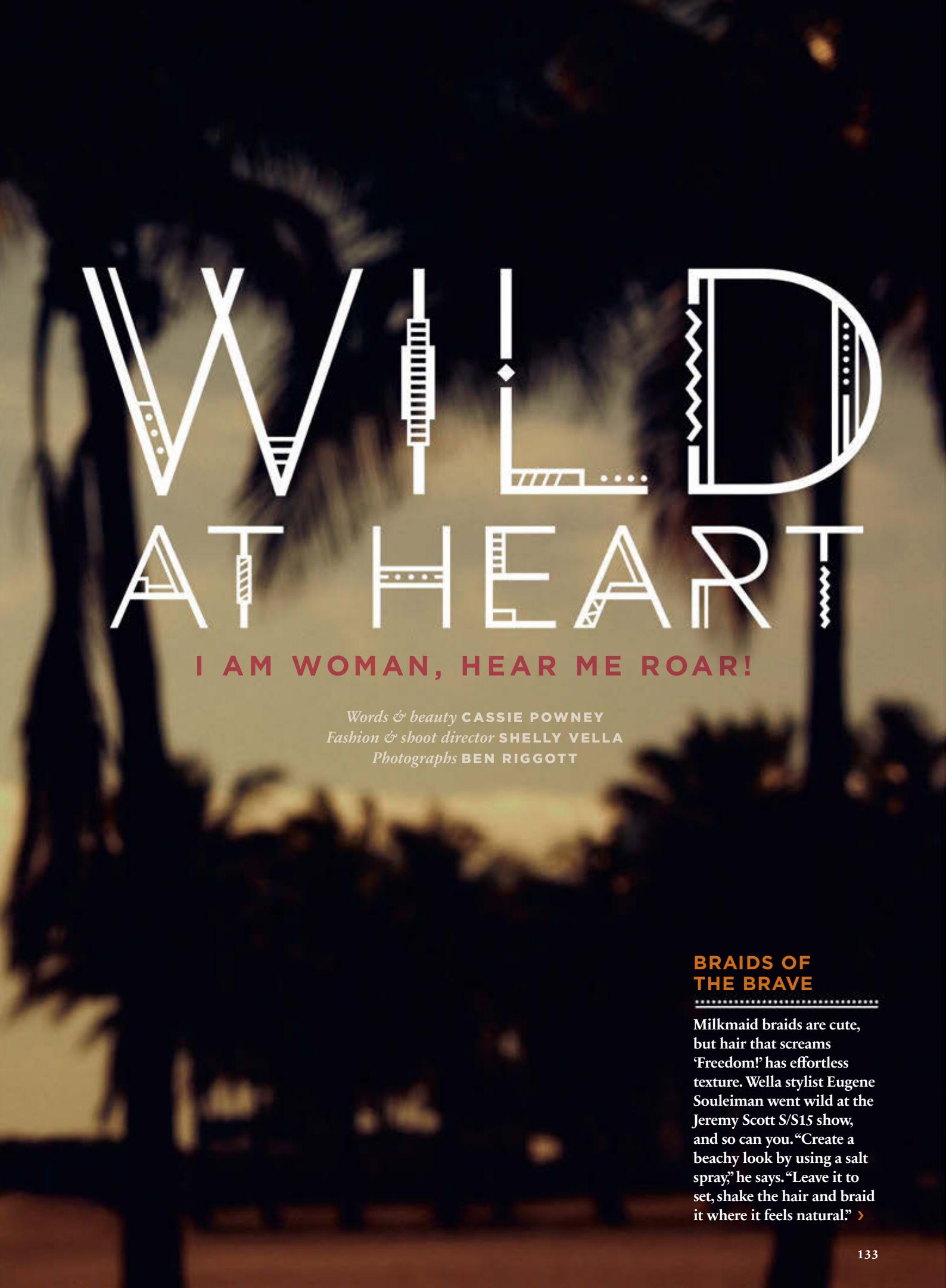
£45,
Darling



Instaglam

Top, H&M.
Necklaces, Daisy
And Eve at Evans





WILD AT HEART

I AM WOMAN, HEAR ME ROAR!

Words & beauty CASSIE POWNEY
Fashion & shoot director SHELLY VELLA
Photographs BEN RIGGOTT

BRAIDS OF THE BRAVE

Milkmaid braids are cute, but hair that screams 'Freedom!' has effortless texture. Wella stylist Eugene Souleiman went wild at the Jeremy Scott S/S15 show, and so can you. "Create a beachy look by using a salt spray," he says. "Leave it to set, shake the hair and braid it where it feels natural." ▶

Top, H&M.
Earrings and
necklace,
Freedom at
Topshop

SHOW YOUR COLOURS

Carefree colour against raw skin is the brave and beautiful look of the season. We loved how sun-bleached pastels 'spilt' onto models' faces in the S/S15 Marques Almeida show. Apply one or more super-bright shadows to the lid using a shader brush, then blend above the socket crease and out towards the temples. Round off the edges for a graphic finish.

WILD EYES

Outgrown your feline flick? Time to upgrade to tigress eyes. We're talking jumbo flicks that extend beyond the inner corner of the eye and stretch closer to the temples. Mac's director of makeup artistry Terry Barber suggests layering a gel or cream-based formula first, followed by liquid liner for a more intense black. Or soften the look with colour: "Navy has a decadence that can make dramatic eyeliner more wearable," says Terry. ▶

Dress, Pinko.
Earrings,
New Look





*Shampoo and Conditioner vs. flat, limp hair.

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Jumpsuit,
M Missoni.
Necklace,
Freedom at
Topshop

GOLDEN AGE

The sun-worshipping shade of yellow gold adds a touch of luxe to summer skin.

Layer gold pigment on the lids for a sheet-metal effect and use the residue on your brush or finger to gently highlight your cheek and brow bones. "This creates the same effect as sunlight hitting wet skin," explains Terry. Or bring a smoky eye to life by applying a dot of gold to the inner corners and centre of the eyelids. ▶

BRAIDS OF THE BRAVE



SHOW YOUR COLOURS



WILD EYES



GOLDEN AGE



HARIAN DJURKIN AT ARTIST MANAGEMENT.NET. MAKEUP: BRIAN DUPREY AT JUDY CASEY INC. USING MAC COSMETICS. MODELS: ANNA RUDENKO AT WOMEN NEW YORK AND PHILOMENA KWAD AT MODELS1 FASHION ASSISTANT: KATIE SAXON. STILL LIFE: HEARST STUDIOS. SUGARPILL AVAILABLE AT LOVE-MAKEUP.CO.UK

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THE MAKE-UP OF MAKE-UP ARTISTS

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SCENTED LITTLE HELPERS

Can perfume really help you reach your goals or solve your issues? *Cosmo's* beauty team check in to scent therapy to find out



Instaglam

BEAUTY
DIRECTOR

INGE


SEEKS
EMOTIONAL
SUPPORT

 or someone who is allergic to change (*waves*), these are testing times.

The world of work is in perma-flux and I find myself grudgingly adjusting to ever-changing circumstances. On the home front, things are no more stable: my beloved dad is getting old and doddery, and my husband is having a crisis of confidence. Suddenly, the rocks in my life are relying on me to be the strong one. It makes me feel sad, vulnerable and scared. Could certain scents comfort me, or perhaps help make me stronger?

**MY PRESCRIPTION, BY
PERFUME YOUTUBER AND
EXPERT KATIE PUCKRIK:**

"I refer to perfume as 'therapy for the soul' because it truly is. Just the act of inhaling scent puts you in the moment and stops the squirrels in your head running wild. So imagine what the *right* scent can do! When you feel challenged and vulnerable, it really helps to smell things that reaffirm your essential 'you-ness', which often means scents that take you back to a time when you were at your most carefree and happy. For you, that's your teens in the '80s, when perfume was bold



and oriental. Chypres, those comforting warm, woody and mossy mother-nature smells, remind you of your mum, so are go-tos as well.

"Oriental and chypre perfumes also make sense for you from a fragrance-note point of view. Woody patchouli and vetiver are soothing and calming, while sandalwood and musk have a skin-on-skin-like quality that can be like a warm hug. Myrrh and frankincense, often found in oriental scents, are quite hypnotic and help you stop to reflect – there's a reason why they're burnt in churches! I would also seek out rose and geranium notes as they can help calm and balance your emotions. Lastly, dry, powdery iris is great for strength and composure. It's a real 'don't mess with me, I'm boss' note for those times when you need to exude a sense of control you don't feel inside.

"My best advice to you is to not just spray scent, but to use perfumed oils and candles as well. Creating a nurturing, scented ritual in the middle of life's chaos is like a sanctuary for your soul to help you get your force field back up."

Bella Freud
1970 candle, £38. An ode to my birth year, notes of frankincense and myrrh make me feel meditative.



THESE SCENTS HIT JUST THE RIGHT NOTE FOR ME



Chanel N°19 Poudré EDP, £94.50. Ladylike with lots of iris to leave me calm and in control.



La Perla EDP, from £29. Dry, warm, elegant and made in the '80s, this classic chypre spells comfort to me.



Frederic Malle
Portrait Of A Lady EDP, £145. As big as my fave '80s orientals, with masses of frankincense, this makes me feel as happy and safe as I did back then.

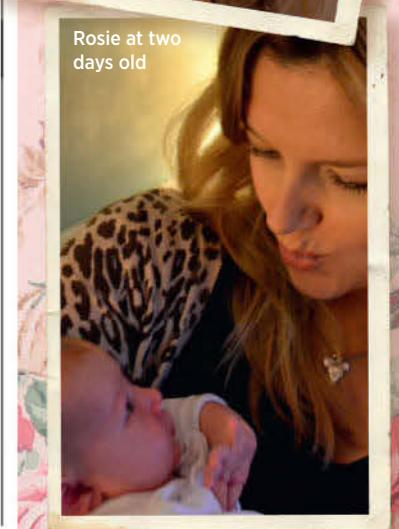
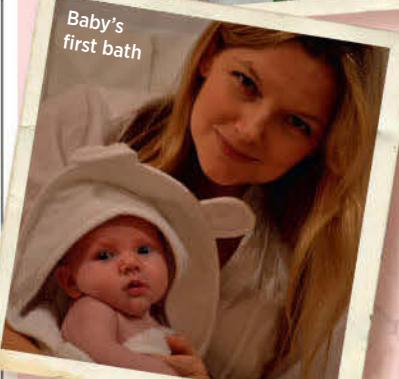


Aromatherapy
Associates Inner
Strength Bath &
Shower Oil, £40.
With geranium and
vetiver to help settle
my frayed nerves
and emotions.

BEAUTY
EDITOR

KATE


WANTS TO
BEAT THE
BLUES





My second baby is due in April and I'm worried that I'll struggle with the post-natal depression I had after the birth of my first child, Rosie. When she was born, all my favourite fragrances suddenly felt smothering and didn't seem to 'fit'. I ended up ditching perfume completely so she could connect with my natural skin scent. But was I missing a trick? Could fragrance actually help boost my health and happiness during this intense and demanding time?

MY PRESCRIPTION, BY PERFUME ARCHIVIST JAMES CRAVEN OF LES SENTEURS:

"Perfume can be tough on a new little person. It's best to step away from anything artificial in the early days, but still surround yourself with healing smells. Focus on fresh air: leave the back door and windows open if you can. Welcome nature indoors and fill your house with the scent of soil, spring rain, sap and trees. Ask friends and family to bring you living plants instead of cut flowers; a hyacinth growing before your eyes symbolises new life. And a scented candle is soothing, plus you'll enjoy the ritual of lighting a real flame."

"After a few months, try wearing a new fragrance but adopt a childlike approach. Think, 'What smells make me happy?' Then start simply, maybe with a delicious soap or bath oil. Classic colognes are great because they tend to be lighter and contain traditional

therapeutic ingredients, such as herbs and citrus.

"Throughout history, perfume has been seen as a spiritual matter: if something smells delicious it's considered holy, which is a comforting tradition during life's big upheavals. Citrus notes such as lemon, orange, tangerine and grapefruit have been used for centuries to beat depression. Neroli is also very uplifting. If you're struggling with sleeplessness, lavender can help ease headaches and rose is considered good for female problems in general. Vetiver is earthy, while galbanum is bitter and bracing – both can make you feel alert and confident."

"Worth a special mention is vanilla. It's sometimes considered the closest thing to the taste and scent of mother's milk, which is why it's so universally loved. Wearing a vanilla-based scent early in your child's life could end up being a life-long love affair, for you and your whole family."

Diptyque Roses candle, £40. My all-time favourite candle, I had this on every table at my wedding.

The Body Shop Vanilla & Tonka Bean Body, Room & Linen Spritz, £7. A lovely light way to fill my home with the magic of vanilla.

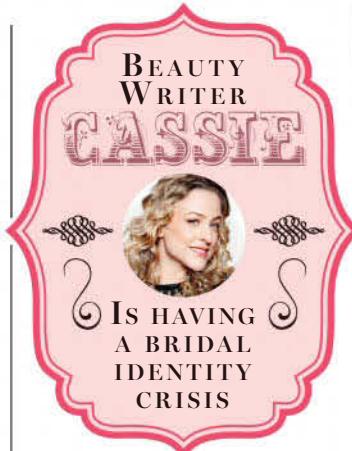
FEEL-GOOD FRAGRANCES ON MY LIST

Atelier Cologne Grand Néroli Cologne Absolue, £85. Feel-good citrus notes with herbs and vanilla, this is happiness to my bones.

Frederic Malle Vetiver Extraordinaire EDP, £115. Smells like a woody, earthy, comforting place where I want to be.

Cloon Keen Atelier Tulum EDP, £65. Hot sand, salty skin and cocktails: all my happy-holiday smells in one bottle!

Me and my Neil

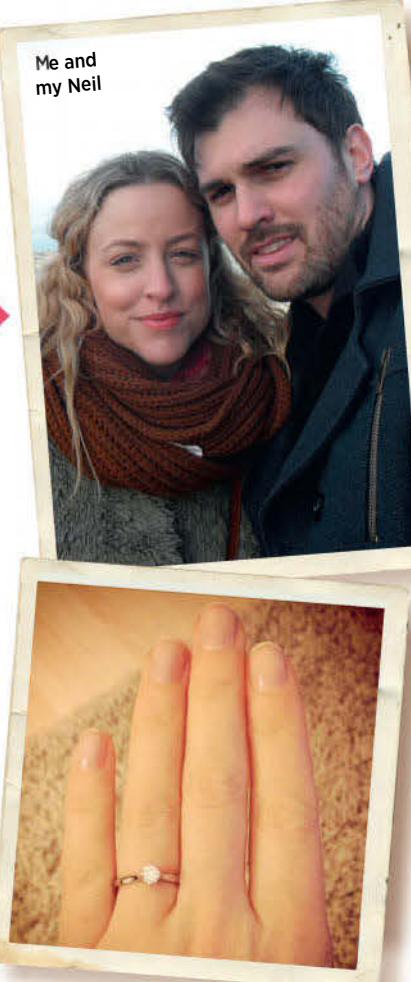


When my boyfriend Neil proposed to me,

I of course said yes (after a bit of shocked swearing). But that's not to say I was suddenly able to picture myself as the gushing, white-gowned focal point of such a big and daunting event. Unlike some, I don't have a life-long desire to feel like a princess, so just what or who do I want to feel like on my wedding day? And can a perfume help me to establish an emotional identity in a situation I'm struggling to slot myself into?

MY PRESCRIPTION, BY PERFUME DESIGNER AZZI GLASSER:

"Here's the thing: there is no one-size-fits-all approach to finding a fragrance that will put you in the right headspace for your big day. So your countryside venue, not-too-traditional dress and relaxed hair and makeup are all vital clues for me. As are the fragrances you list as your day-to-day favourites: Stella McCartney, Narciso Rodriguez Narciso and Reiss Grey Flower. The last one on your list suggests an affinity to woody, musky accords. Have you and Neil considered wearing the same fragrance? Marriage, after all, is about two people



becoming one – how apt it would be to reflect this with a matching scent. As a bride, you will naturally become a more empowered version of yourself, pumped up by lots of love and compliments, so perhaps the job of your wedding fragrance should be to ground you with familiarity? My immediate thought is a light chypre – a glowy-skin type of smell with lots of happy energy. Helena Bonham Carter describes the bespoke fragrance I created for her as the 'armour' she wears on the red carpet when all eyes are on her; a kind of emotional touchstone.

"Your love of deeper notes also leads me to myrrh and musky vetiver oil. These are known as life notes, in that they live longer on the skin than any others. Appropriate for a wedding, wouldn't you say? Another life note is the sacred-smelling sandalwood. I burnt it at my own ▶

wedding to purify the air – a tradition that also pulled me back to my Indian roots. And don't discount romantic florals such as iris, rose de mai and mimosa. They have an almost leathery quality – in other words, they're florals that will leave a trail rather than disappear on a breeze."

THE CEREMONIAL SCENTS I'VE FALLEN FOR



Narciso Rodriguez
Narciso EDP, from £39. I swooned over this before meeting Azzi, so her spot-on recommendations only confirm my bridal identity was with me all along. It's The One.

Marni Spice EDP,
from £49. I loved the original (once described to me by a perfumer as fizzy incense and scorched florals), so this new spiced-up version ticks all my bridal boxes.



Giorgio Armani
Si EDT, £54.
(Available from April) With the warm wood and musk notes I naturally seek out, this chypre has a sexy silk-on-skin delicacy.



Radley London EDP, from £34. Something fresher for my summer wedding, but with the necessary deeper additions, such as frankincense and oud.

**BEAUTY
ASSISTANT
LUCY**



WANTS A MOTIVATION BOOST



THE SCENTS THAT MAKE ME FEEL EMPOWERED



L'Artisan Parfumeur
Voleur de Roses EDT, £85. Nick described this as, "Like roses shattered in a thunderstorm", signifying power and strength of resolve.

I joined Slimming World in January 2014 and am miraculously still turning up every week, but I'm struggling, especially because I live away from home so I don't have the support of my mum and dad. I managed six months of consistent weight loss (I'm 34lbs down at the time of writing) before I got stuck.

I just don't feel motivated anymore. So, I'm hoping that with a bit of help, I can find a scent that'll not only encourage me, but will also remind me why I bothered to sign up in the first place.

MY PRESCRIPTION, BY FRAGRANCE EXPERT NICK GILBERT:

"This is essentially about determination and willpower, so we need to find you a fragrance that's totally kick-ass. Something that will give you the encouragement you need to keep you going, but will still make you feel confident and invincible after you reach your goal. It's important the scent is still relevant to you, so we need to keep in mind your taste in perfume, which has changed in the past few years. You're now drawn to smoky, woody fragrances, which is ideal as they have the properties you need from your scent right now.

"If you think of woody plants such as trees, they're strong and independent: two key features that you're going to need to draw from this. Scents such as vetiver, sandalwood and carnation have a sort of power to them that will really help set your frame of mind. They're

Cloon Keen Atelier Lune de Givre EDP, £65. A woody chypre that gives me a kick-ass confidence boost. It's understated, but powerful.



Cloon Keen Atelier Lune de Givre EDP, £65. A woody chypre that gives me a kick-ass confidence boost. It's understated, but powerful.



Penhaligon's Eau Sans Pareil EDT, £110. This comforting amber and patchouli scent fills me with optimism (mum wears it too!) ♡

READ ANOTHER SCENT STORY 

ALIEN

Feel extraordinary

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ALSO AVAILABLE IN
REFILLABLE BOTTLES

Thierry Mugler

A large, close-up portrait of a woman with vibrant red hair and blue eyes, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing a white t-shirt.

SHIFT A SHADE & FIND YOUR

TRUE COLOUR

I wasn't always a redhead.
You'd never know it though, because
it's Nice'n Easy. Natural looking colour
that's always true to you.



SO NATURAL LOOKING, IT'S THE
UK'S #1*

nicen
easy
CLAIROL

*Based on IRI Retail hair colour volume and value sales, July to date ©2015 P&G

Christina Hendricks is wearing Nice'n Easy 6R Natural Light Auburn

clairol.co.uk

Instaglam

GETTING READY WITH RITA

A night in the life of pop star and party animal Rita Ora

Before a night out I always eat... Whatever I can get my hands on, because I can't cook! A nice pasta, maybe. You never want to look like you're really hungry when you eat in front of people at a party.

The music I get ready to is... Anything disco – Abba always gets me going. Can you imagine me dancing around my flat to *Dancing Queen*? I live with a gay guy so it's like Pride every night. My go-to karaoke song is *Time After Time* by Cyndi Lauper.

My favourite party outfit is... Something a bit rock 'n' roll – leather pants, a rocky T-shirt and some thigh-high boots. When I aim for understated it probably seems really dressed up to everyone else!

My night-out beauty look tends to be... A red lip – it completely transforms me. And I like festival hair – loose waves that look a bit salty, like you've just come off the beach. My hairdresser Chris Appleton is amazing – we just have fun and treat my hair like it's art.

My best night out ever was... Going to watch *The Hunger Games* with my brother recently! I love to party, though – I work hard so when I go out I dance all night and surround myself with good company. All my friends are crazy!

The makeup I carry in my clutch is... My Laura Mercier concealer so I can top up my under-eyes throughout the night, and the new Rimmel lipgloss in Ooh La La, but I apply a red lip liner all over first to amp up the colour. Also, shine sheets by Paul & Joe and a Rimmel mascara.

My party perfume is... Le Labo Santal – ever since I could afford it, that is. It's more than £100 a bottle.

The night I felt most beautiful was... On my birthday, because you always feel special on your birthday. It wasn't about the way I looked, I just felt special.

Red-carpet events can be a wardrobe-malfunction minefield when... Presenting at an awards ceremony once, the zip on my jumpsuit broke and I had to get it



Rocking her trademark red lips at the MTV Video Music Awards

pinned up. I walked onto the stage and Pharrell Williams was in the front row, so I was like, 'And this was going to be my cool moment!' Another time I didn't wear knickers to the MTV Video Music Awards because my dress was practically poured onto me. I had to be careful about the wind, but luckily I didn't flash.

Before I go to sleep I...

Take a painkiller and down loads of water so I don't wake up with a headache. I also put Sudocrem on any spots – it dries them right out. And I always wear an eye mask so the light doesn't wake me up – it's a comedy one that says, 'Fuck off, I'm sleeping!'



Smouldering at the British Fashion Awards



One of Rita's more 'arty' hairdos

Rimmel London Scandaleyes XXtreme Mascara in Black, £6.99

Le Labo Santal 33 perfume, from £105

SANTAL 33

Rimmel London Oh My Gloss! in Ooh La La*, £5.49

OIL EDUCATION

Tempted to work an oil into your skincare routine but unsure if it's for you? Here's the lowdown on the benefits...

If your skin is on the oily side, or even normal-to-combination, it's likely you steer clear of products boasting oil as the key ingredient. But it's time for the myth to be debunked – oils can benefit *all* skin types (not just the severely parched ones), as well as hair and nails in need of a boost. Eloquence is a new skincare range infused with sacha inchi oil from Peru, known for its high levels of vitamins, antioxidants and fatty acids. The *Eloquence Nourishing Treatment Oil* is a great all-rounder, and can be applied to skin, hair and nails, or even blended with your usual moisturiser, shower gel,

shampoo or conditioner. The Omega-3 fatty acids found in the oil help to rehydrate the skin restoring the elasticity, and protecting it from environmental stress. Sacha inchi oil is also great for the fine skin around the eye which is prone to natural slackening; teamed with hydrating hero Hyaluronic acid, *Eloquence Firming & Moisturising Eye Gel* helps to plump and smooth this delicate area. The Eloquence range has your skin, hair and nailcare needs covered and even better, you can get all five products in a handy kit. So are you ready to give your skin some oil therapy?



 ELOQUENCE

The Eloquence range

There are five fabulous must-try products in the Eloquence range including the Purifying Facial Cleanser, Firm & Tone Serum, Firming & Moisturising Eye Gel, Protect & Repair 24hr Cream and the Nourishing Treatment Oil, all boasting the hero ingredient, sacha inchi oil. To order and for more information, visit Eloquencebeautycare.com.

Excess BAGGAGE

Are your eyes trying to tell you something? Here's what those pesky lines and dark circles really mean – and what to do about them

★ PUFFINESS ★

What's up? "Puffy eyes are due to a build-up of fluid and could suggest an underlying problem such as an allergy to your makeup, or hay fever," says Dr Anita Sturham of Nuriss Skincare And Wellness Clinic. A stuffy nose or water retention can also cause swelling.

Do this If you suspect an allergy, ask your pharmacist for an antihistamine. Otherwise, cut out salt and alcohol, and try **Benefit Puff Off**, £22.50, which has bloat-busting ingredients.



★ CROW'S FEET ★

What's up? These little blighters are usually the first natural wrinkles to appear, from as early as age 25. You can't beat ageing, but smoking, sunbathing and squinting will make things worse.

Do this Invest in a kick-ass anti-ageing eye cream, ideally one with peptides and antioxidants, such as **Nuriss Eye Perfecting Contouring Cream**, £55, then ditch the fags and don suncream and shades.



★ BROWN UNDER-EYE CIRCLES ★

What's up? Are you a secret sun junkie? "Sunlight increases your natural pigmentation, which makes dark circles even darker," says Anita.

Do this Wear SPF every day and rock your sunglasses even on cold-but-bright days.

Murad Instant Radiance Eye Cream, £49.50,

promises to minimise dark circles by up to 30% in 15 minutes.



★ CROSS-HATCHING ★

What's up? Noticed more lines under one eye than the other? "If you always sleep on the same side, pressing your face into the pillow every night can cause cross-hatching," says Anita.

Do this Make sure you switch sides often or, even better, invest in a silk pillowcase. **This Works No Wrinkles Tired Eyes**, £42, also helps prevent lines forming while you snooze.



★ BLUE UNDER-EYE CIRCLES ★

What's up? "As we age, the skin around our eyes thins, which makes the blueish blood vessels beneath more prominent," says Anita. Blue half-moons also appear if you excessively rub your eyes or sleep on your stomach.

Do this Look for collagen-boosting eye creams to strengthen the skin, such as **SkinCeuticals AGE Eye Complex**, £78.



PUT A SPRING *in your sex life*

Whether you're feeling romantic, naughty, silly or sensuous... the new Durex.co.uk website promises to deliver it all (and then some)

Spring has sprung and isn't it about time we all tried something new? We reckon the best (and most fun) place to start is in the bedroom – and luckily Durex has one or two cheeky suggestions for you. Whether you love the thrill of thinking up saucy new things to do together, or you want to give him a naughty surprise when you see him next, Durex.co.uk is brimming with exciting new discoveries for the bedroom, perfect for you and him to explore and enjoy this spring.

Have you ever used a toy together? No? Don't be intimidated – you're about to change your sex life for the better, ladies. Plus, you'll give him the

night of his life knowing what he's doing to you...

But whether it's toys he can use on you, or discoveries you can both have endless hours of fun with at the same time, head to the new Durex site and you're both guaranteed a night you won't forget (trust us, he'll thank you for it). Check out the Multi Functional Vibrating Stimulator (it's whisper-quiet for the ultimate discretion) or try the Sensual Bliss Intimate Massager (think: surface stimulation with powerful vibrations, plus a specially designed round shape for easy handling), plus dozens more fun treats to keep you both entertained. Who said shopping can't be sexy?

Explore together

Promising fast, discreet delivery (so your neighbours or colleagues won't have a clue what you've just ordered), Durex.co.uk has everything you need for a hot night in *à deux*. Tried the Extreme Thrill Premium Rabbit? With an easy-to-use three-button interface – allowing full control of the vibration pattern and intensity – you can pick from five vibration functions on the shaft, and seven in the rabbit ears. Or why not let him choose? Then test out the Thrilling Touch Single-Speed Stroker – made of body-safe materials, with a velvet-touch surface for a super-smooth feel. Small and discreet (but with powerful vibrations), the pin-point stimulation promises focused intensity and clitoral stimulation. Better cancel your weekend plans...



The new Durex.co.uk site is brimming with exciting new discoveries for the bedroom, perfect for you and him to explore together this spring...

Instaglam



Behind the scenes
at Demi's New York
Color photoshoot

LOVE, Demi

*Demi Lovato talks
beauty, body confidence
and airbrushing*

BY LUCY PARTINGTON. PHOTOGRAPHS CHRIS NICHOLLS/CONTOUR BY GETTY IMAGES. STYLING HEARST STUDIOS

I wouldn't say no to having cosmetic surgery. I'm 22, so I don't need it right now, but I'm not going to say I'll never have it because I don't know what's going to happen when I'm older. I'm not totally against it; each to their own. I'm just about trying to love my skin and myself as much as I can.

If I didn't agree with airbrushing, then I wouldn't agree with makeup. I'm definitely not an extremist when it comes to airbrushing, but is it necessary to use Photoshop on every single thing that's in front of you? No. Do I like Photoshop when it's over the top? No. There are limits, but too much makeup and too much airbrushing is

the same kind of concept. Everything is good in moderation.

There's a lot of pressure that comes with being a role model. But I just try to deal with it by accepting it and focusing on my life and my health and not worrying about other people.

I don't censor myself. I'm always very outspoken so I don't think twice before I fire out tweets. I'm very straightforward; I say it like it is.

Learning to love yourself isn't just one thing. It's a matter of taking care of yourself. One thing that helped me to gain body confidence is realising that I only get one body, so every time I go to eat something I think, 'Is this benefiting my body?' Sometimes it's not, but that's OK. Taking care of myself makes me feel better on days when I feel gross or when

my clothes aren't fitting like I want them to. I know I'm doing what I can.

If you're struggling with body confidence, always remember your body is your temple, but nothing's worth

killing yourself over. [Demi has battled eating disorders from a young age, and now campaigns to promote positive body image.] We all have imperfections; it's about valuing your body.

My heart is my favourite body part. I'm talking about the organ – it's so fascinating to think that it's working away 24/7 just to keep me alive.

People looking up to me helps me stay strong on bad days. It's a blessing and a curse though, because it means I can't show weakness; I'm accountable. Sometimes I feel like I'm put on a pedestal, but I'm not Superwoman.

I look for inspiration on Instagram and Pinterest. I love finding random beauty looks on there and showing them to my makeup artist.

Eva Longoria is my role

model. I have a lot of strong women in my life who are big influences, but Eva does a lot as an activist and she's a very talented actress. She's the perfect example of how to use your voice for good.

My signature beauty looks are pretty simple. I love a smoky eye or a red lip, but it's funny because I don't like to wear makeup unless I go all the way in – it's all or nothing!

Being the face of New York Color makeup is pretty cool.

It's all about bold colour and I am too, especially when it comes to my hair and makeup. I used to play with eyeshadows and lipsticks as a kid and I always wanted my face on the back of makeup stands – and now I finally have it! My favourite product is NYC Expert Last Lip Color in Traffic Jam, £1.99.

NYC Smooch Proof Liquid Lip Stain in Unforgettable Fuchsia, £4.99



We are family

Getting skincare advice from your mum and grandma goes without saying – but what happens when you dish it out to your elders?



It's a well-known fact that our mums, aunties and grandmas are filled to the brim with useful skincare advice that'll never age, but now the tables are turning. It's us younger ones who are now learning more and sharing it with our elders, and here's the proof: beauty-vlogging sisters Becky and Holly Sheeran have not only welcomed their mum Gill into the world of blogging, they're also dishing out their own skincare secrets, starting by reintroducing Gill to The Body Shop®. It's the brand that understands beautiful skin doesn't necessarily have to be young skin: "It's about having hydrated, moisturised and radiant skin that glows," explains Reine Diop-Awad, international skincare director at The Body Shop.

Gill says she used to go to The Body Shop all the time. "I got all my body-care products from there, but I think it just fell off my radar over the years," she says. "I didn't even realise it did skincare until my daughters started raving about all the different ranges there. Now they're sharing their new product finds, and I know all about the importance of using a serum under my moisturiser for maximum hydration. I love it!"

"The Body Shop Vitamin E Serum-In-Oil has got all the benefits of a serum with the indulgence of an oil, and it leaves my skin feeling super soft and moisturised"

MEET BECKY

Becky Sheeran is a TV presenter, and vlogger at [Youtube.com/user/talkbeckytalk](https://www.youtube.com/user/talkbeckytalk)

"I love the fact that The Body Shop searches all over the world to find the purest, best possible natural ingredients to create its skincare. The products are amazing value for money too – you get the quality of top skincare brands but at half the price."

BECKY'S BEAUTY MUST-HAVE

Our bodies don't create the antioxidant vitamin E, so that's why The Body Shop puts its highest concentration of wheatgerm oil – one of nature's best sources of the vitamin – in its Serum-In-Oil, £13 for 28ml. For Becky it's a staple: "At The Body Shop they call it 'beauty sleep in a bottle,' and I have to agree!" she says. "It's got all the benefits of a serum with the indulgence of an oil, and it leaves my skin feeling super soft and moisturised."





MEET HOLLY

Holly Sheeran is a beauty vlogger: see her channel at [Youtube.com/user/twinkleslashes](https://www.youtube.com/user/twinkleslashes)

"The Body Shop products work – they really do! I love going into the stores and having a play with them all. The service is always so warm and friendly as well. Some of my favourite products are the Camomile Cleansing range – they're really gentle but very effective."

HOLLY'S BEAUTY MUST-HAVE

Camomile is well-known for its calming properties and Holly has started using the Camomile Cleansing Oil, £10 for 200ml. "It's already my new fave!" she says. "It's so quick and has a lovely blend of oils that leaves my skin soft and supple."



MEET GILL

Gill Sheeran is a new beauty blogger: check out her blog at Growingolddisgracefullyblog.co.uk

"I rate my daughters' opinions and I know they'd only recommend things that work, so eventually they took me into The Body Shop for a free in-store consultation (probably to stop me pinching their stuff!). It was a lovely experience, and I found a regime that I love and suits my skin."



GILL'S BEAUTY MUST-HAVE

The secret behind The Body Shop's Drops Of Youth™ Bouncy Sleeping Mask, £22 for 90ml, is potent edelweiss plant stem cells, included to support cell renewal. Using it has made Gill look and feel great: "It does what it says – it makes my skin feel bouncy again and the texture seems to mould to it. It feels nourishing all night long."

Win all the products seen here!

Can't wait to find out more? Come in-store for a free skincare consultation, get top tips from our skincare experts at Beautyblog.thebodyshop.co.uk, or host a party with The Body Shop At Home™. Call 0800 092 9090 to book, quoting Cosmo.

Have you received any invaluable beauty advice from your mum that's too good not to share? Tweet us the best skincare tip your mum's given you for the chance to win all the products featured on these pages. There are 20 sets up for grabs, so get tweeting! #TBSskincare @thebodyshopUK



"Drops Of Youth Bouncy Sleeping Mask does what it says – it makes my skin feel bouncy again and the texture seems to mould to it. It feels nourishing all night long"

A large, close-up photograph of Christy Turlington Burns occupies the left two-thirds of the advertisement. She has dark brown hair pulled back, green eyes, and is wearing a white top. Her right hand is resting against her head, and her left arm is bent with her hand near her shoulder.

Christy Turlington Burns
Model, Mother, Maternal Health Advocate

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Beauty
CONFESION

Diary of a hair chameleon

Writer **Amy Swales** can't stick to one look – but does that mean she's not a grown-up?

What have you done?" my boss yelped. "You've turned into a punk!" To be fair, I was dressed to meet friends after I finished work at the greengrocers – an outfit that, at 15, involved glittery tights, denim and holographic Docs. However, it wasn't my clothes he was staring at, but my hair – a shade I'll call, 'messy home-dye purple on top of red' as much on my ears and neck as my hair. Shortly afterwards, my services were no longer required. What I realised (sadly too late to save my greengrocery career), is that, for me, hairstyles are almost as temporary as outfits.

Most of my friends have had the same signature style for years, finding what suits them and sticking with it, give or take the odd fringe or spot of balayage. But mine has been long, short and in-between in a rainbow of colours. It was platinum for my wedding (a retro-glam shade to go with my beehive). I had a '60s Twiggy crop when I moved abroad,

and as it grew out I dyed the ends peach. It's not just the cut and colour either; I constantly change styles, even winning the Dannii Minogue Award For Most Versatile Use Of A Bob as a joke at a work Christmas party.

So what does this say about me? While it's mostly that I get bored easily, it's clear some dramatic hair changes coincided with big life shifts. After Goth adolescence, I had a few long, blonde years of calm. Then at 22, soon after I split up with my boyfriend and got into a new

relationship, I lopped it into a bob. The confused reaction from my ex when he saw it reaffirmed how good I felt about the change. My mid-twenties

brunette phase was almost certainly a reaction to anxiety – I was freaking out about my career and I'd grown apart from some friends. Changing my hair was a way of taking control, and what can I say? I felt dark.

Of course occasionally it goes wrong. A cut too soon after a cool colour job meant the back of my newly-shorn head

'There's something about the buzz of change; the, "Why the hell not?" of it all'

resembled a Thundercat's. Once, the hairdresser simply didn't believe that I wouldn't regret going short – resulting in a trim and subtle highlights so safe, I looked like something a child would draw if asked to do a picture of a boring haircut. Which is one of the reasons I go all or nothing: when maintaining costs as much as a style overhaul, why not have the wow factor?

There's something about the buzz of change; showing it off to friends; the, 'Why the hell not?' of it all. Who says staying the same is adult? Feeling confident in your choices is also part of growing up. Hair does not maketh the woman – just ask Helen Mirren about that baby-pink rinse...

Behavioural expert Judi James says: "We tend to change our hair when we want to redefine ourselves and symbolically 'kill off' our previous version. But does that mean Amy's not a grown-up? No. Genuine maturity involves being open to change and keeping the widest horizon in terms of your own potential."

DOES YOUR HAIR ALWAYS LOOK THE SAME OR ARE YOU LIKE AMY? TELL US AT COSMO.MAIL@HEARST.CO.UK

THE Beauty LAB



SHAMPOOS TO BOOST BLONDE HAIR

THIS MONTH THE FAIR-HAIRED COSMO STAFFERS ARE INJECTING LIFE INTO THEIR LOCKS

Tigi Catwalk Fashionista Violet Shampoo, £12.95

This purple potion looks a little scary in the bottle, but worked a treat on my dull highlights, giving my hair a noticeable shine boost. Best of all, my hair felt insanely soft and conditioned, just like after a trip to the salon.

Kate, Beauty Editor



Schwarzkopf Essence Ultîme Blonde & Bright Shampoo, £4.99

I noticed a lovely lift in my blonde after using this citrus-infused shampoo. And I loved the lush smell and healthy shine it left behind (I even skipped conditioner – unheard of!).

Cassie, Beauty Writer



OGX Sunkissed Blonde Lemon Highlights Shampoo, £6.99

Using this shampoo definitely did give my colour a boost – I could tell because I noticed that my roots were way more obvious than they usually are. However, it did feel like it made my already-tangly locks somewhat more tangled, so using a conditioner afterwards is a must!

Suzy, Deputy Editor



KMS California ColorVitality Blonde Shampoo, £13.50

This light-purple shampoo smells amazing, left the brighter, bleached parts of my hair looking a lot more radiant than usual and my hair felt clean and free of any product build-up after use.

Victoria, Art Director



There's A TREND

Right now it's all about... serum pearls



Nivea Q10 Anti-Wrinkle Serum Pearls, £13.99

Applied directly to cleansed skin, the gold pearls (which are packed with a mega dose of clever antioxidants) dissolve into the hyaluronic-acid-based gel and together they'll perk up and hydrate skin while smoothing out wrinkles over time.



Elizabeth Arden Flawless Future Ceramide Caplet Serum, £48

This pretty-looking bottle is packed full of skin soothers and brighteners – applied twice a day before your moisturiser, each pump activates the ingredients housed in the pearls, meaning you get a fresh dose of actives every time.



Guerlain Abeille Royale Daily Repair Serum, from £90

This expensive serum does it all: not only will it help improve skin's elasticity and tone, but the so-called 'micro-spheres' help to repair and heal stressed skin too. Plus, it'll keep your face plumped and hydrated thanks to the gel in which the beads sit.





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Aloha from OPI

Lacquers from left to right:

Suzi Shops & Island Hops • Just Lanai-ing Around • Hello Hawaii, Ya? • This Color's Making Waves
My Gecko Does Tricks • Pineapples Have Peelings Too! • Aloha from OPI • Go with the Lava Flow
Lost My Bikini in Molokini • Is Mai Tai Crooked? • Do You Take Lei Away? • That's Hula-rious!

All Hawaii Collection shades are available in GELCOLOR BY OPI

Try it on at opiuk.com    #OPIHawaii

Hair candy

Give your hair a pretty makeover with this new range of tools, available exclusively at Tesco

Being served up a daily dose of unpredictable weather is nobody's idea of fun, especially when you're trying to keep your hair looking smooth, frizz-free and full of volume. However, there's a brand new styling range on the block and it's here to save your lifeless locks. Available exclusively at Tesco, there's 16 easy-to-use electrical tools in the THX Total Hair Experts collection so there will be something to suit all of your hair's demands. And with prices starting from as little as £15, we know there's no excuse for letting your hair be the victim of unreliable weather again. THX Total Hair Experts and Tesco are also behind this year's most exciting hair styling comp, the *Cosmo Style Off*. Interested? Keep reading...

STYLE IT OFF!

If you've got a passion for hair then listen up, because this competition is for you! In March 2015 we're asking 10 of you to show us your skills – either on your own model or one we'll provide. There'll be a professional judging panel on the day and a fab prize. Plus, the winner will appear in the May issue of *Cosmopolitan*. Eek! For more info and to sign up head to Cosmopolitan.co.uk/Styleoff



COSMOPOLITAN
Style off

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Choose your weapon

With 16 expert tools in the THX Total Hair Experts Range, there's no better excuse to treat yourself. Whether it's cute curls or poker straight locks you want, THX Total Hair Experts have the gadget for you. Turn Up The Heat Digital Straighteners reach 235°C and the Sleek and Chic AC Dryer boasts an ultra-slim nozzle and a 3m cord. For more info visit Tesco.com



Sleek and Chic AC Dryer, £49.50. Turn Up The Heat Digital Straighteners, £60

We're always happy about a new Disney film release... especially when it inspires a dreamy range of nail polishes! Cue: **Cinderella by Morgan Taylor**, £10.99 each.

If you're a sucker for dreamy textures, you'll love **Darphin Exquisâge Beauty Revealing Cream**, £65, a cushiony treat to nourish and protect your face.

Giorgio Armani Eye Tints, £26.50 each, are fairy-wing-tinted liquids that form a silky, budge-proof veil of colour on your lids.

Diptyque Eau Plurielle, £55, is a zingy multi-use fragrance you can spray on skin, clothes, bed linen, in the air or even add to your washing!

Issey Miyake L'Eau d'Issey City Blossom, £51, is an urban floral fragrance (think: flowers blossoming on a city wall), with spring-breeze notes of freesia and magnolia.

bareMinerals COMPLEXION RESCUE TINTED HYDRATING GEL CREAM, £24, is a tinted gel-cream in 10 shades so hydrating you can genuinely skip the moisturiser

HOT right now

The latest products on the Cosmo beauty team's radar

It's a proper eye opener: **Benefit Roller Lash Super-Curling & Lifting Mascara**, £19.50, has a genius brush that really does lift and curl your lashes.

Match your sign to your suds with a **Fresh Zodiac Oval Soap**, £12 each, and rest assured knowing astrology guru Susan Miller helped create these celestial soaps.

Tanning breakthrough alert! **Vita Liberata Trystal Minerals**, £35, is a mineral bronzer that also develops into a natural tan lasting up to five days!

Used like a conditioner, **John Frieda Luxurious 7 Day Volume In-Shower Treatment**, £9.99, deposits weightless little polymers on the hair shaft that make locks bigger and bouncier through three washes.





Cosmo's guide to the **BIG WEEKEND**

WITH



What ingredients would make your perfect weekend? Mammoth lie-ins? Fantastic food? All your best friends? Enough chocolate to fell a bear? All of the above? This is why Easter has to be one of Cosmo's favourite weekends of the year. With four whole work-free days to fill as you please, there's nothing not to

like. So whether you choose to stay in and hibernate (eat like a bear, sleep like a bear, right?), get involved with what's happening in your area, or pack your bags and head off for a girls' mini-break, we've got the bank holiday covered. Gather your friends, pore over the next six pages, and prepare for your best Easter ever, Cosmo-style... ›



The decider

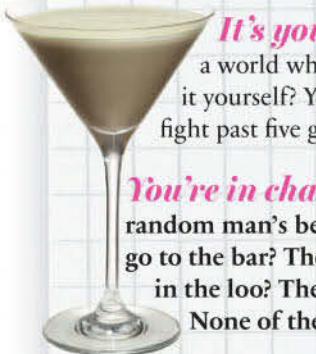
Staying in vs going out

Not sure what to do with your big weekend? Let us help you make your mind up...

7 REASONS STAYING IN RULES

Being near your bed Half the fun of hosting a girls' night in is avoiding a public-transport nightmare. Take THAT, night bus and eevilly-long taxi queue!

The knowledge that your best friends don't judge... and won't bat an eyelid if the only thing you put on your face all night is a pore strip.



It's your overdraft's little helper In a world where a cocktail costs £10, why not shake it yourself? You'll save cash and you won't have to fight past five giant rugby boys to order it.

You're in charge of the guest list That random man's beer breath on you when you go to the bar? The girl crying for no apparent reason in the loo? The guy invading your dance space? None of these people will trouble you tonight!



The world is your takeaway oyster Indian, pizza, Chinese, Thai, ice cream... all a mere phone call away. And no need to spend a fraught half hour in Tesco trying to find cardamom pods – likewise, no chopping, dicing, spiralling or washing-up. Praise be.

... and no one's likely to spill a pint down your new onesie either Unless it's you. Then, quite frankly, that's your bad.

You can really shake it off In a club, who actually dances like no one's watching? Exactly. At home you're as rhythm-blessed as Blue Ivy, so go for it!

7 THINGS WE LOVE ABOUT GOING OUT

Getting ready is half the fun Just knowing you're in possession of your best friends, killer shoes and all the possibilities of the night ahead is an awesome feeling.

Tonight, you could meet The One Or just The One Who Knows The Entire Routine To All The Single Ladies. Either way, result.

The feeling of triumph when you skip the door queue or land a table. Yessss!!

The heart-stopping joy that enters your soul when THAT song comes on... and you and your friends don't say a word, you just run for the dance floor to own it.

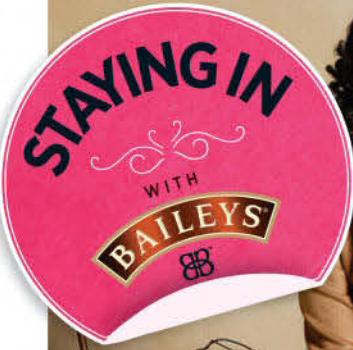
Going to the loo is a major event The makeup, the gossip, the drama, the occasional lollipop... you don't get this at home.

You gain magic powers Those heels you could barely stand up in in Topshop? Now you're Uptown Funking in them like a boss. Skills.

Making new best friends in the cab queue You might have forgotten their name by the next day but you, like, totally connected. And not just over the fact that you shared their cheesy chips. >

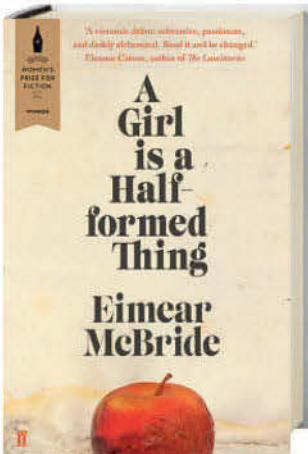
Is staying in looking good? Turn to page 164 for some genius ideas. If going out's got your vote, turn to p166 for what to see, do and wear.





YOU WANT TWISTS, TURNS AND A FAST-PACED PLOT

★ WATCH THIS Olivia Pope (Kerry Washington) kicks some serious White House ass as she negotiates the murky world of politics in *Scandal* series three.
★ WATCH WITH The most indulgent burgers (à la *Scandal*'s fictional Gettysburger joint) you can make. Add peanut butter, bacon, Buffalo sauce or lashings of blue cheese.



YOU WANT A DARK, DAZZLING READ

★ READ THIS *A Girl Is A Half-formed Thing* by Eimear McBride (£8.99, Faber & Faber) Eimear won last year's Baileys Women's Prize for Fiction – and with good reason. Her debut novel tells the story of a young woman's complex relationship with her seriously-ill brother. Gripping, brave and brilliant.

YOU WANT DIGESTIBLE POLITICS

★ READ THIS *None Of The Above* by Rick Edwards (£7.99, Simon & Schuster) Alongside *Cosmo*, *Free Speech* presenter Rick is a vocal supporter of the Bite The Ballot campaign, which encourages everyone to register their vote (head to Gov.uk/register-to-vote if you haven't already). This book explains why using your voice is so, so crucial.

RICK EDWARDS

NONE OF THE ABOVE

VOTE

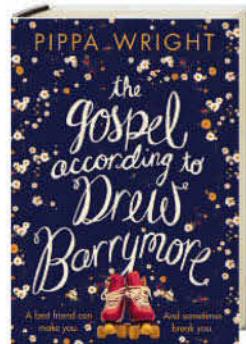
YOUR VOTE IS YOUR VOICE
DON'T STAY SILENT

YOU WANT TREACHERY, PLOTTING AND BACK-BITING

★ WATCH THIS As series three of *House Of Cards* hits Netflix, President Underwood (Kevin Spacey) is flexing his new power. Watch with fellow fans: it helps during those 'Um, what's a caucus again?' moments.
★ WATCH WITH BBQ ribs, pork and chicken wings, just like the President's restaurant-owning pal Freddy made him.

YOU WANT ROMANCE

★ READ THIS *The Gospel According To Drew Barrymore* by Pippa Wright (£7.99, Pan) Mismatched best friends Esther and Laura base their life choices on 'What would Drew Barrymore do?'. When Laura goes missing, leaving a mysterious note, Esther sets out to find her, wondering how their film-idol obsession might be connected...



TUNE IN, VEG OUT

Planning a weekend of sofa dwelling? These brilliant books and boxsets will see you through



YOU WANT A PRETTY, SEXY ESCAPE

★ WATCH THIS Get lost in *Indian Summers* starring Julie Walters and Henry Lloyd Hughes (aka the bully in *The Inbetweeners*). Set in India in 1932, this sexy political drama is like *Downton* on heat! Available now on Channel 4OD.
★ WATCH WITH A colourful salad: mix cucumber, radishes, sweetcorn and peaches. Dress with olive oil and sunflower seeds. Or, um, order a curry.

YOU WANT INSPIRATION

★ READ THIS *Young At Heart: The Likes And Life Of A Teenager With Progeria* by Hayley Okines (£9.99, Accent Press, out 19 March). Hayley (whose sister Charlotte was shortlisted for a *Cosmopolitan* award for her amazing support) describes her life with an illness that has trapped her in the body of an old woman.



PIMP THAT egg!

Because chocolate + more chocolate = bliss



Take a small Easter egg, halve, then fill each half with soft vanilla ice cream. Scoop a hole in the middle and fill with Baileys 'yolk'. Yum!



Take a hollow Easter egg, make a hole in the top and fill it with Angel Delight. Pop it in the fridge and you'll have a pudding to be truly proud of...



If you fancy nibbling on a minion's mush (and who wouldn't?), whip up one of these cakey treats. See Jens cakery.co.uk for inspiration.



Pimpthatsnack.com shows you how to make giant versions of snacks. This enormo-Crème Egg weighs 2.25kg and has an estimated 10,000 calories!



Beauty bites

Want to pamper yourself without leaving the house? Grab these kitchen staples and your hair and skin will reap the benefits

PINEAPPLE

Fresh pineapple contains enzymes that break down protein, giving it a natural exfoliating effect that banishes dead skin cells. Rub a slice on your face, then rinse after a few minutes to make your skin feel like velvet*.



NATURAL YOGURT

Not only is yogurt great for binding home-made masks and scrubs, it has revitalising and moisturising properties too. Mix with finely ground walnuts for a great DIY hand and foot scrub – the natural levels of lactic acid will leave them super-soft.



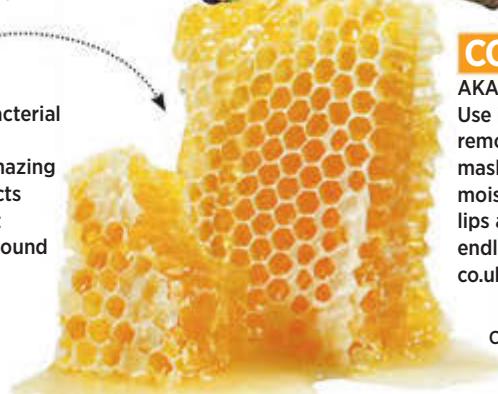
AVOCADO

Avocados are packed with youth-boosting ingredients including antioxidants that protect your skin from environmental damage, vitamin C to boost collagen, and moisturising fatty acids. One soft avocado is all you need for the most effective facemask ever. Mash it up, apply all over your face (avoiding the eye area) and leave for a few minutes, before washing to reveal glowy skin.



HONEY

Honey's wealth of antibacterial and anti-inflammatory properties make it an amazing spot buster. Plus it attracts and holds moisture, so it won't dry out the skin around a spot either. Win-win.



COCONUT OIL

AKA the holy grail of everything. Use it as bath oil, makeup remover, shine-boosting hair mask or simply as a natural moisturiser for your face, body, lips and nails. The uses are endless (head to Cosmopolitan.co.uk/coconutoil for even more).>



hot list

If staying in isn't for you, head to these hot spots for a guaranteed good time



EDINBURGH



BOURNEMOUTH

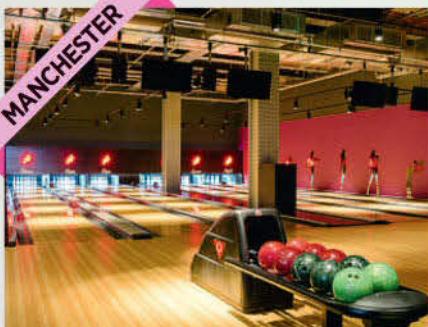


BIRMINGHAM

- ★ **Chill** 17th-century Prestonfield House (above, [Prestonfield.com](#)) is luxurious, stylish and full of character. Enjoy a Baileys Irish Coffee by the fire, or a classy afternoon tea.
- ★ **Eat** Cosy Dusit Thai ([Dusit.co.uk](#)) is smack bang in the city centre – and the food is incredible.
- ★ **Do** Unwind at The Jazz Bar ([Thejazzbar.co.uk](#)). With gigs every weekday as well as at weekends, you'll find funk, fusion, soul and blues (as well as jazz, of course). We're feeling mellow already...
- ★ **Party** The Bramble Bar ([Bramblebar.co.uk](#)) boasts kick-ass cocktails, music and staff. We're on our way!

- ★ **Chill** Sweet tooth? Then The Chocolate Boutique Hotel (above, [Thechocolateboutiquehotel.co.uk](#)) is your kind of place. Think cocoa-themed bedrooms, chocolate-making courses; even chocolate *breakfasts*!
- ★ **Eat** The handmade, wood-fired pizzas at Bournemouth Pizza Company ([Bournemouthpizza.co.uk](#)) pack a seriously tasty punch.
- ★ **Do** Hone your surf style at Bournemouth Surf School ([Bournemouthsurfschool.co.uk](#)). Its friendly (and accredited) surf instructors teach paddle-boarding too. See ya there, dude.
- ★ **Party** Aruba ([Aruba-bournemouth.co.uk](#)) has great cocktails and music – and those sea views are *gorgeous*.

- ★ **Chill** You've got to love a cinema where you can put your feet up *and* eat pizza: Everyman Cinema ([Everymancinema.com](#)).
- ★ **Eat** Fleet Street Kitchen ([Fleetstreetkitchen.co.uk](#)) serves up fresh, British-sourced food cooked on an impressive barbecue grill. Its Sunday roasts rule too.
- ★ **Do** Local muso fave The Loft ([The loftmoseley.com](#)), hosts everything from live music to monthly burlesque nights.
- ★ **Party** The Jekyll & Hyde (above, [Thejekyllandhyde.co.uk](#)) isn't just a party venue, it also offers retro film and club nights. Its evening cocktail selection alone is worth the trip. Quirky, fun and totally unforgettable.



MANCHESTER



BRIGHTON



LONDON

- ★ **Chill** Join Mojo's Sunday Screenings ([Mojobar.co.uk](#)) from 9.30pm – classic films with tipplers played in the Rhum Room.
- ★ **Eat** The Urban Food Fest ([Urbanfoodfest.com](#)) offers 15 food trucks selling street food, from Korean ramen burgers to cronuts.
- ★ **Do** Score a strike at All Star Lanes (above, [Allstarlanes.co.uk](#)). Every Friday, 6pm-3am, entry is free and DJs spin the coolest funk, soul, disco and rock 'n' roll. So even if you're rubbish at bowling, you'll still leave smiling.
- ★ **Party** Boombox ([Facebook.co.uk/boomboxmcr](#), 4pm-3am) takes it back to the old school, playing nostalgic '90s beats and jams. There's even a ping-pong room.

- ★ **Chill** If comedy's your thing, Komedia ([Komedia.co.uk](#)) is the place for hot new acts.
- ★ **Eat** The seafront Salt Room ([Saltroom-restaurant.co.uk](#)) – sister to the award-winning Coal Shed – is a must-do treat.
- ★ **Do** Metrodeco ([Metro-deco.com](#)) is the place for scones *and* vintage fashion treats. It even offers a 'gentleman's afternoon tea', featuring a more savoury selection.
- ★ **Party** BYOC Bar ([Byoc.co.uk/brighton](#)) stands for 'bring your own cocktails': take your favourite spirits and the mixologists will do the rest. It's cool, atmospheric and friendly – but there's no phone signal, so your Instagram snaps will have to wait till later.

- ★ **Chill** Matthew Williamson's afternoon tea at Balthazar (above, [Balthazarlondon.com](#)) is inspired by his spring/summer collection. The Chasing Rainbows cocktail is divine.
- ★ **Eat** Opening this month, Big Fernand ([Facebook.com/bigfernandlondon](#)) does gourmet 'hamburgés' and French cheeses. And they aim to serve you within 40 seconds!
- ★ **Do** Exercise the vocal chords at Lucky Voice ([Luckyvoice.com](#)). Enjoy your own private room and sing like your life depends on it.
- ★ **Party** Cahoots ([Cahoots-london.com](#)) is a cool new underground venue that transports you back to the '40s. Expect drinking, dancing and singalongs around an old piano – hurrah!

City slicker

Perfect looks
for seeing the
sights or hitting
the shops



City break



vs Country retreat

Heading away for a weekend with the girls? We have your capsule wardrobe sorted, whatever the destination!





Get ready for a fabulous girls' night out!

Baileys, beauty and a goody bag? Er, YES!

Getting ready for a night out with your best friends is just as much fun as the moment you hit the dance floor. So why not join *Cosmo* and Baileys for the ultimate girls'-night-out pampering session? Sip a Baileys Espresso Martini or a glass of bubbly, with gorgeous canapés and mini Baileys desserts, while you enjoy complimentary beauty treatments – blow-dries, manicures, makeovers, mini-facials and spray tans – to get you night-out ready. Your luxurious experience will be topped off with a fabulous gift bag full of extravagant freebies: the perfect start to a great night of friendship and fun. ♦

Kick things off with a Baileys Espresso Martini

Your fabulous evening includes treatments from BENEFIT, NELLA MILANO, GUINOT, MILK_SHAKE and ST MORIZ



GET TICKETS!

• DATE & TIME •

28 March 2015, 6.30pm–9.30pm

• VENUE •

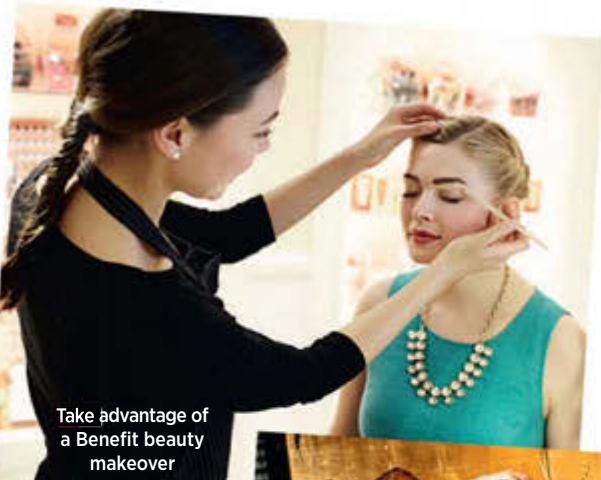
Oxo Tower (level two),
Bargehouse Street, London SE1 9PH

• PRICE •

£35 per person – includes baileys inspired cocktails, bubbly, canapés and FREE beauty treatments, plus a fab goody bag

• TO BOOK •

Visit Cosmopolitan.co.uk/baileynight



Take advantage of a Benefit beauty makeover



Strut your stuff to a live DJ set from Blonde Ambition, aka Deanne Oliver-Evans



• Attendees must be over 18

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**FREE NAIL POLISH
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clean · dry · fresh
always

Health

etc.

HEALTH IN YOUR HAND

It's often blamed for making us lazier, but being addicted to social media and your smartphone actually helps you be more active and eat more fruit and veg, say US researchers. The study found that health apps can nudge us into making good fitness and food choices. Candy Crush doesn't count, soz.



STAND AND DELIVER

Standing or sitting up straighter can boost your mood and help you feel more capable, say US researchers. Try it at work or before a date for a quick kick of confidence.



“EXERCISE IS SO AMAZING FROM THE INSIDE OUT. I FEEL SO ALIVE AND HAVE SO MUCH ENERGY.”

Vanessa Hudgens

TV TURMOIL

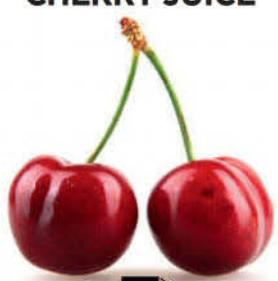
THE MORE TV YOU WATCH, THE MORE UNHEALTHY SNACKS YOU EAT, ACCORDING TO A UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON STUDY. UNLESS YOU'RE WATCHING THE COSMO BODY SHOW, THAT IS!

Tune into Fab TV (254 on Sky) every Tuesday night at 10pm

60-MINUTE YOGA WORKOUT

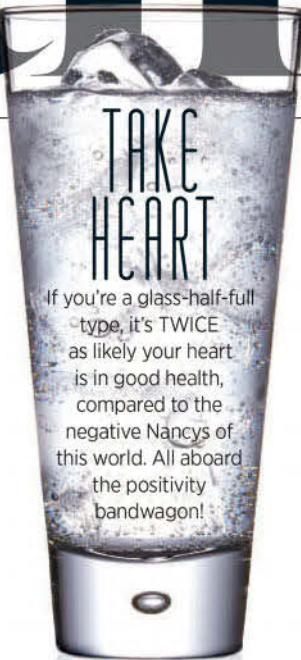


1 GLASS CHERRY JUICE



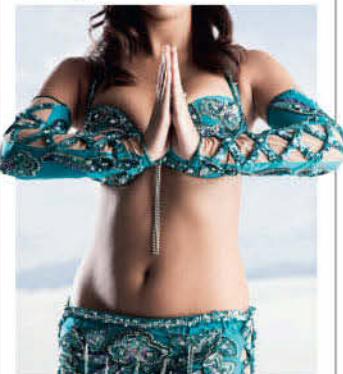
NATURAL INSOMNIA REMEDY

Eating a little bit of an unhealthy snack with a bit more of something healthier leaves you feeling more satisfied than if you just noshed through a load of the naughtier food, say US researchers. They call it a vice/virtue bundle.



If you're a glass-half-full type, it's TWICE as likely your heart is in good health, compared to the negative Nancys of this world. All aboard the positivity bandwagon!

★★★★★
Hips don't lie



Women who take belly-dancing classes are more confident about their bodies than those who don't shimmy or shake, according to a survey from Flinders University in Australia. Check out Uk.bellydanceclasses.net to harness your inner Shakira at a class near you.



Advanced nutrition for skin, hair & nails

Advance your daily regime with *Perfectil® Original*, the UK's No. 1 Triple-Active™ formula to support normal skin¹, hair² and nails³.

Perfectil® Plus Skin, Plus Nails, Plus Hair or Max each provide the benefits of the original, plus more.

Perfectil® Platinum tablets provides 30 nutrients and is the ultimate product in the range.

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Perfectil® – because true radiance starts from within.



Perfectil® tablets



Original

Plus Skin

Plus Hair

Plus Nails

Max

Platinum

VITABIOTICS
WHERE NATURE MEETS SCIENCE



Britain's No.1
supplements**

From Boots, Superdrug, Holland & Barrett, Lloydspharmacy, supermarkets, chemists, GNC, health stores & perfectil.com

Stockists may vary. Perfectil® Plus Hair is only available in Boots. 1. Includes biotin which contributes to the maintenance of normal skin. 2. Includes zinc which contributes to the maintenance of normal hair. 3. Includes selenium which contributes to the maintenance of normal nails. *Nielsen GB ScanTrack value sales 52 w/e 21 June 2014. **(IRI) value sales. 52 w/e 6th Sept 2014.

LOVE
YOUR
BODY

My body's amazing because...

**ZARA LOUISE GILL, 26,
IS A MARTIAL-ARTS
INSTRUCTOR FROM KENT**

I'd just turned 12 when I stopped eating. I compared myself with the tall, slim girls around me and felt such pressure to be thin. I'm only 5ft tall and seemed much chubbier than them because of it. Aged 13, I figured out that I could throw up food instead of not eating at all, and for the next four years I struggled with bulimia.

I made the decision to move out of home at 17 – I'd had a difficult childhood and wasn't close to my parents. A year later, I made friends with a couple, Christopher and Jack, who acted like caring, supportive parents. I loved them so much, I called them both 'dad'.

Yet my body worries continued, especially issues with my height. I felt like a flat-chested teenager rather than a grown woman. Then, in 2012, Christopher was killed in an accident at work. I was devastated, and for 16 months it was just me and Jack, helping each other through. But last February, Jack died of carbon-monoxide poisoning in his car, and I felt so alone.

My grief was overwhelming. I stopped caring about anything – my diet included – and put on a stone. Then one day, I looked in the mirror and realised I felt amazing in my body. The extra weight had filled me out and given me shape, and I finally had boobs. Through all that sadness, it felt like someone was looking down on me and giving me a break.

I'm still grieving for Christopher and Jack, but my body confidence is now at its peak. I look like a grown-up, and even though some of my 12-year-old students are taller than me, they know I'm the boss. The stone I gained does slow me down a little in my martial-arts training, but I'm working with it and I'm on track to getting my black belt this year. It took a tragedy to get there but, at last, I'm happy with the body I've got.



AS TOLD TO KATE RUSSELL. PHOTOGRAPH THOMAS WATTS. HAIR AND MAKEUP VICTORIA BARNES

SEE MORE FROM ZARA AT
**COSMO
ONLINE**
COSMOPOLITAN.CO.UK/ZARA



LOVE
YOUR
BODY

We know how important they are, so why is one in three of us still missing them? Cosmo's **Sophie Goddard** womans up and books herself in...

Face the **SMEAR** and do it anyway



Six years ago this month, Jade Goody died of cervical cancer aged just 27. When news of her illness broke, the 'Jade effect' quickly took hold, and

more than 400,000 extra women were screened for cervical cancer in England in the seven months between her diagnosis and death. In some clinics, screenings (which pick up pre-cancerous cells from the cervix, so they can be treated before they become cancerous) soared by a staggering 20%.

We all felt the same way: if this could happen to happy, healthy Jade, it could happen to *any* of us. But new research shows that, sadly, the 'Jade effect' has worn off, with one in three women aged 25-29 regularly missing her smear test. Even if we're not missing them, half of us put it off, and a quarter worry it'll be painful or embarrassing. And I'm painfully embarrassed to say I'm one of them – at 30 years old, I've *never* had a smear test.

It's shameful, I know – in my job at *Cosmo* I'm more than aware of the importance of getting tested. I *know* that more than 3,000 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer every year in the UK, but that it's also one of the most preventable cancers (when caught early, the five-year survival rate is nearly 100%). The truth is, I'm scared.

'It's not as scary as getting cancer!' I hear you shout. But my fear is real – and extreme. I faint at injections and blood tests. I once passed out in the middle of the road after having my ears pierced (shout-out to the nice motorist who stopped to help me up). I even collapsed accompanying a friend to hospital for a colposcopy. And I spent a day in A&E with suspected concussion after fainting – head first – onto my GP's desk because he prodded a mole on my face. This huge phobia means I avoid the doctors at all costs... not ideal for a 30-year-old journalist who writes about this kind of thing for a living.

Plus, constantly moving house and failing to register with a new doctor

means I've never received one of those 'Your smear is due' invitations. And with my friends/family/boyfriend blissfully none the wiser, nobody's nagged me about it either. But, deep down, I'm aware that's nothing to be proud of, because I know cervical screening saves around 5,000 lives a year. I just haven't been ready to do anything about it...

So in hindsight, it was pretty lucky my boss caught wind of the situation and insisted – under no uncertain terms – that I *had* to go. The bad news? I *did* faint. But not because it was painful or scary. At all. No – I just managed to work myself up into such a state that by the time I arrived for my appointment, I was already close to hyperventilating. I hadn't eaten breakfast either (rookie error). My doctor was reassuringly lovely and, after asking me a few simple questions about my general health, asked me to undress from the waist down and lie on the bed.

While I pretended I was having a *very* intimate bikini wax, she used a small speculum and brush to sweep cells from my cervix, which just felt a bit weird rather than painful. Really, the smear itself was fine. I can't stress that enough.

My doctor was great, it *wasn't* embarrassing, and because speculums are plastic now – not cold, hard metal like back in the day – it wasn't that uncomfortable, either. The 'test' itself was over in minutes – seconds, even – and it was only afterwards that I felt a bit dizzy and... oops, I'd fainted. Standard Sophie.

But you know what? Even as I lay on the couch, red-faced and sucking the sugary lollipop the kind doctor passed me post-faint, the only thing going through my head was, 'Yes! I bloody did it – and it wasn't so bad!' And that's coming from *me*, Sir Faint-A-Lot. Even better was receiving my results the following week. They were completely 'normal' – as most of them are. Ladies, I promise you, holding that letter in your hand feels a *hell* of a lot better than ignoring your smear test for another year. So if you've been putting it off like I did, I urge you to go.

20%
of young women
think cervical
screening is an
'unnecessary
health test'

HELP!
I'm going for
my smear!

There's nothing to stress about, says Nuffield Health GP Dr Davina Deniszczyc

Who needs to go?

All women over 25 in the UK (20 in Scotland). Cervical cancer is caused by the HPV virus, which is transmitted through contact (not just penetrative sex). So even if you're a virgin, you can still contract it.

How often do I need to go?

If you live in the UK, you'll be invited for a smear test every three years until you're 65.

Can I go when I'm on my period?

No, it's best to go mid-cycle (a week after your period has ended). But any time when you're not bleeding is fine.

Any tips?

If you're nervous, try breathing or mindfulness techniques – focus on taking nice, deep breaths. Keep your feet wide apart too – this will relax your pelvic floor.

How will I get my results?

If your results are normal, your GP will send you a letter within two weeks and you'll be recalled in three years' time for your next smear.

What if my results aren't normal?

Around 93% of tests are normal, but 2% of results are 'inadequate' (ie, not enough cells were collected); if so, you'll wait three months for the cells to grow back before having another smear. Up to 5% of tests are abnormal, meaning they could be borderline (the most common result, which usually requires no treatment) or 'dyskaryosis' (which means cells are changing, classed as mild, or moderate or severe). Dyskaryosis requires a colposcopy (it feels like a smear) to check the cells. ♦

My Greek Style Honey Yogurt

MY PASSION is making amazing yogurts using the best ingredients. That's why I only select PURE ORGANIC HONEY. Its sweet delicate taste combines beautifully with my DELICIOUS THICK AND CREAMY yogurt and is a real delight.

Rachel



Rachel's. MY NAME. MY PASSION.

Soup it up

Make that boring shop-bought lunch a nutritional superstar

LOVE
YOUR
BODY

Change up your croutons

Roasted sweet potato, parsnip and beetroot are all super-healthy stand-ins for bread croutons – they'll add fibre, vitamin C and immune-boosting phytonutrients.

How to Dice veg and toss in olive oil, paprika and a pinch of salt. Bake on a tray at 200°C for 20–25 mins, tossing halfway through.

Say yes to yogurt

A dollop of natural yogurt makes soup creamier (the saintly way) while amping up your calcium hit, for stronger bones and a healthy heart.

Get spicy

A helping of chopped red chilli will not only give the flavour of your lunch a kick, but your metabolism too.

Go nuts

Nuts and seeds add crunch and make soup more satisfying thanks to their protein and fibre. Pumpkin seeds, crushed almonds or pine nuts won't overpower the flavour either.

Avo-go

Sliced avocado is a tasty topper for almost all soups, especially spicy or bean-based varieties. It adds protein, skin-boosting vitamins and omega-3 for brain function.

Pile on the greens

Stir a handful of spinach, kale or chard through soup while it's piping hot for an immune-system-boosting dose of zinc and vitamin C, plus stress-busting vitamin B and magnesium.

Boost it with beans

Chickpeas, beans or lentils are a cheap-and-cheerful way to make soup more filling, while adding B vitamins for an energy boost.

LOVE
YOUR
BODY

Get fitter together

This couples' routine will take your relationship and your body to a new level

GIVE ME FIVES

Both get into plank position with your palms under your shoulders, facing each other. Lower your chests to the floor by bending your elbows, then press back up. When your arms are straight again, each extend your right arm out at shoulder level to clap your partner's hand. Repeat, but clap left hands.

SOUND OFF Count your reps in unison to stay in sync on timing.



PLANK LADDERS

Have your partner get in plank position with his feet just wider than hips. Hop sideways over his legs back and forth, raising your knees, then swap positions.

WARM UP Pump your arms as you move to get blood flowing to your upper body.



LUNGE TWISTS

Stand toe-to-toe, facing each other with your fingertips behind your heads, elbows out. Both step back with your right foot to lower into a backward lunge. At the bottom of the lunge, twist your torsos and heads to the right, then twist in the opposite direction. Return to the standing start position and repeat with the left leg.

SLOW DOWN

Perform your lunges slow and steady for the best body benefits.



How to do this workout

Do each move for 30 seconds, then switch positions with your partner. Go straight into the next move without resting. At the end of the routine, rest for up to one minute. Repeat two more times.

STARRY EYES

1 Both get into side-planks, balancing on your palms with your feet stacked so your backs are touching and your top arms are extended straight towards the ceiling.

2 Each reach your top arm down to the space between your hip and the floor, and press your hands together. That's one rep; repeat. Switch sides and repeat.

MAKE IT HARDER Try to get your entire bodies – even your legs – to touch.



PUSH IT

1 Have your partner lie flat on the floor, face up. Get into push-up position with your hands outside his legs and your shoulders and feet outside his shoulders, so you're looking at his legs.

2 He grasps your ankles and lifts them, extending his arms to do a chest press. You do push-ups as he raises and lowers your legs.

Swap positions so you perform the chest presses.

ABS IN Keep your core tight for balance and power.





Bye-bye body hang-ups

Dr Linda Papadopoulos unravels the causes of poor body image

THE DILEMMA

I'm really paranoid about my bad breath



A couple of years ago a friend took me aside and advised me to do something about my bad breath. I was shocked and upset as I've always cleaned my teeth religiously and use mouthwash. Since then I've felt so self-conscious and paranoid and I'm scared to talk to people. How can I deal with it?



No one wants to hear their breath is bad, but it's better you do know so you can tackle it. You're not alone: bad breath (halitosis) affects some 95% of people at some point. If you want to see whether you still have bad breath, a good test is smelling your dental floss after you use it. If it smells, your breath most likely does too. The good news is this problem is usually easy to fix. It's often down to oral-hygiene issues, such as neglecting the tongue area (where a lot of the bacteria that cause bad breath are) when brushing. Also, cavities or gum disease can lead to bad breath, as can cracked fillings. Smoking, eating certain foods, drinking too much alcohol, medication and stress can also contribute. Several internal medical conditions could also be the



Be confident and don't hide your mouth when you talk

cause. These include diabetes, liver disease, respiratory-tract infections and chronic bronchitis. So see your doctor to rule these out. Then make sure you practise good oral hygiene. Ideally, brush and floss after every meal, and use an alcohol-free mouthwash. Also be aware of what you eat; avoid garlic and spicy foods, and be aware that certain diets – such as extreme fasting – can cause halitosis. Once you've resolved the issue, speak confidently, don't hide your mouth when you talk and let the knowledge that you've taken all these steps counter your anxiety when you're around people.



RETWEET THIS WANT A POSITIVE, HAPPY THOUGHT TO SHARE ON TWITTER? DR LINDA'S INSPIRATIONAL WORDS WILL HELP...



Linda Papadopoulos @DrLinda_P

Do less: focus on essential tasks – the ones that will give you the most return for your time.
#CosmosDrLinda

5 UNEXPECTED BENEFITS OF EXERCISE



More body confidence
The act of exercising can boost your self-esteem, even if your figure stays the same.



A stronger brain
Cardio workouts don't just strengthen your body: research shows they help your brain create new cells too.



A better mood
Exercise releases the same feel-good chemicals as alcohol (minus the hangover).



Sleep like a baby
An afternoon workout can have the same effect on your body as a sleeping pill.



Get that promotion
Studies show regular exercise not only boosts your creativity, but productivity too.



Ready for a new smile?

For more opportunities to get pregnant naturally try Clearblue Digital Ovulation Test with Dual Hormone Indicator. It's **the only test** that tracks 2 key fertility hormones to typically identify **4 or more fertile days¹**.



www.clearblue.com

Clearblue Digital Ovulation Test with Dual Hormone Indicator identifies more opportunities than other ovulation tests.¹ In a study of 87 women, 4 or more fertile days were identified in 80% of cycles using actual cycle length. Read instructions before use. ©2014 SPD Swiss Precision Diagnostics GmbH. All rights reserved.

Sex etc.



DRUM ROLL, PLEASE

A poll of men revealed that the most annoying excuse women use for not having sex is... 'I don't feel like it now, let's do it later.' Annoying? Totally normal, more like!

PENIS CAPITUS

- what it's called when two people get stuck together during sex. Yes, it can happen apparently - something to do with vaginal muscles spasming *shudders*

"I'D NEVER DREAM OF BEING AS PREDATORY AS THE WOMEN I'VE PLAYED - I CAN ACTUALLY BE A BIT SHY."

Making the first move doesn't come naturally to

Natalie
Dormer

10%

OF PEOPLE NEVER USE PROTECTION DURING SEX. REPEAT AFTER US: NO GLOVE, NO LOVE

When perusing dating sites, skip to the guy's job description.

Just want a fling? So do engineers and actors

- while nurses and accountants are looking for something long-term. At least, according to one dating survey, the results of which have baffled even scientists...



80%

of men think they should pay for the first date.

But just 60%

of women agree. Still, if you insist...



Oh, baby

Being good with kids seriously ups a guy's chances. In an experiment, a man playing with his 'sister's' baby landed women's digits 40% of the time - but a bloke who didn't interact with said sprog only managed 12%. Are we *really* that soft?

★★★★★ ★★★★★



REVVED UP

23% of men say they've received a blow job while driving. Er, safety first, anyone?

Weirdly, men are more turned on by historical documentaries than they are by romantic scenes in films. Jack Dawson in *Titanic* vs the industrial revolution? We know what we'd choose...

LOVE
YOUR
BODY



Four things *all* CONFIDENT WOMEN DO *in bed*

Finding your mojo in the bedroom can be easier said than done, but these four women have nailed it – and they're prepared to tell you how... >

Sexual confidence

is the bedroom holy grail. Who doesn't sometimes wish they were a bit more Samantha 'I'm a try-sexual - I'll try anything' Jones? The good news is, every single one of us can learn how to feel more self-assured in bed – it's simply about identifying your confidence trigger and switching it on...

1 Relax

'I FOCUS ON HOW SEX FEELS'



has been with her boyfriend Harry for six months

I used to feel silly trying different moves, and would ruin it by wondering, 'Is he into it? Am I doing it right?' But then I read an interview with Beyoncé, who said she gave herself an alter ego – Sasha Fierce – when she performed onstage. So I tried the same thing in bed with my then-boyfriend, acting like someone who *did* have confidence. Every time I had a negative thought, I'd block it out and focus on the things that were happening and the way they felt. After a few months, I found I wasn't faking it anymore – I really *was* the confident woman I'd pretended to be.

Because I'm feeling a lot more self-assured now, I don't shy away from talking about sex, either. My boyfriend Harry listens to me and respects what I'm into – I also totally trust him, which means there are no insecurities in the bedroom. If I want to try something new, I make sure we have a conversation about it first. It's really

important to be totally honest with your partner – but at the same time, don't take it too seriously.

I think the key to building bedroom confidence is to relax – take your time and make sure you feel great. No woman should ever worry about a man not finding her attractive during sex – remember, they're with you because they want *you*. • **Cosmo's sex psychotherapist Rachel says:** "Adopting a persona in the bedroom isn't about pretending; it's about absorbing the sexual qualities of someone else – a bit like bringing a fantasy to life. We gain confidence when we take risks – but sometimes we have to trick ourselves into doing so."

2 Experiment

'DRESSING UP MAKES ME FEEL FANTASTIC'



has been in a relationship with boyfriend Nick for four years

When I was younger, my confidence took a huge knock when my then-partner cheated on me with a girl who used to bully me. I felt terrible that he'd chosen someone like her over me, and it took me more than

a year to have sex again. But when I finally met someone new, I resolved not to let one bad experience colour every other one, and simply told myself, 'If it goes wrong, it goes wrong.' It helped me find the confidence to try new things and discover what I liked without fear.

The real turning point came when I got a part-time job with Ann Summers as a party planner. I started experimenting with dressing up, and it really broadened my horizons. Having the focus firmly on me and getting a positive reaction from a guy was amazing – so I gradually ramped things up and started trying out riskier outfits, such as PVC and bondage wear.

My boyfriend Nick loves when I dress up, and it feels very empowering – it's me who decides what to wear, and I'm the one in control. I still get nervous sometimes, especially when I'm trying out a new look, but I just try to push that to the back of my mind. If Nick doesn't like what I'm wearing, I don't take it personally.

I gave birth to our first baby in December, but I haven't let it stop me dressing up. There's such an unrealistic image out there of how women are expected to look, even after becoming a mum. But I just ignore that and think, 'I've got stretch



marks – so what? It's nothing to be ashamed of.'

• **Rachel says:** "You don't wear lingerie for him; you wear it for you, to make yourself feel sexy. If you're not sure how it will be received, you can feel quite vulnerable, so if you're nervous, start fairly covered-up – a skirt and suspenders, maybe. That way he has to strip you to get to the lingerie, and so it's more of an experience too."

3 Communicate

'SEXTING GIVES ME A HUGE THRILL'



Rebecca Jones, a PR from London, has been with her boyfriend Alex for 18 months

Alex and I have never lived in the same city as each other, but it's no obstacle. I want to stay in London and he wants to be in Nottingham, but we also want to be together, so we make it work. We see each other every three weeks, and the rest of the time we use technology to stay close.

We'll sext each other at least every other day, and Skype about once a week. Sometimes it's a little inappropriate (like when I send him sexy photos when he's with his friends down the pub!), but when you're attracted to someone, you don't want to suppress your feelings.

When I'm about to send a message, it gives me such a buzz. I find myself grinning just at the thought of him receiving it. I like the naughtiness of it, and knowing he's thinking of me when I'm not there. For me, finding someone you really trust is the basis of great sex – and, of course, I trust Alex

completely. I've never worried about my messages being seen by the wrong people, and we use an app called KeepSafe, which asks for a password to access your photos. It's opened up a dialogue between us that's made me much more confident, and it makes us more imaginative when we are together.

• **Rachel says:** "We'd all like to be great communicators, but some of us find it tough. Only 10% of communication is verbal, so during sex let him know what you do or don't want using your body. Make noises to tell him you're enjoying it; if you're not, move away to encourage him to slow down. If you want to try sexting but feel shy about it, start with something like, *'I'm running a bath later, maybe you could join me?'* Your partner might find it intimidating if you jump straight in with the graphic stuff, so start small."

4 Know yourself

'WE DON'T ALL WANT THE SAME THINGS'



Emily Burgin, a freelance journalist from Manchester, has been single for the past year

When I came out of a two-year relationship a while back, I thought if you slept

around it was a sign you weren't happy with yourself. It felt like something I could never do – but I was also envious of the way some of my friends could be so nonchalant about it. It took a while to realise they were actually being strong and in control – they were doing what was right for them.

Eventually I met a man who wasn't up for a relationship, but I enjoyed hanging out and having sex with him, so I decided, 'I like him – there's nobody else on the horizon, so why can't that be enough?' Just because it wasn't going anywhere didn't mean it couldn't be nice for now.

It fizzled out after a couple of months, but my memories of our time together are positive, because I'd taken control of the situation. I realised it's OK for two people to enjoy each other without worrying about commitment. I've also discovered that you don't have to be in a relationship to feel happy – I wanted a boyfriend, but now I'm genuinely happy on my own.

I've learnt so much about myself in the past year. I know what I want from sex, I know what I want in a relationship and I know how to ask for it too. I haven't got that many notches on my bedpost, but I've done what I wanted to do, and I've been happy doing it – and that's what really matters.

RACHEL SAYS

"The most important message I can give to any woman is that every time you do something you don't want to in bed, you reduce your sexual confidence – and when you take a stand and say no to something you don't want, you increase it. Ask yourself who you are, and what you want – and remember you're free to change your mind at any point."

MEN

have confidence wobbles too...



"Outside factors affect how confident I feel in bed. Having the time and energy to invest in the sexual side of the relationship can sometimes be difficult."

Owen, restaurant manager



"I sometimes worry about the girl faking her orgasms!"

Ciaran, radio producer



"Early on in the relationship, when you're only starting to figure out your partner's likes and dislikes, you're never quite sure if you're making her completely happy. That can affect confidence."

Conrad, fundraiser



"When there's a lack of trust in the relationship, it makes me lose confidence in myself."

Tibor, engineer



Sex therapy

For change-your-life sex advice, ask Cosmo's sex psychotherapist, **Rachel Morris**



How do I ramp up our sex life?

I'm seeing an older guy. Can you give me some tips on how to turn him on? I feel like I just do the same things with him every time. His last girlfriend was older and more experienced than me. I'm worried he might find me boring in bed compared with her.

Even the most experienced women make this mistake – it's not about what you do but why you do it. Think about how you approach sex with him. What's your intention? Is it A) to try hard to please him so you don't feel so insecure about his ex. Or B) to explore your sexual potential and discover the furthest reaches of your desire? One is fraught with pressure; the other fizzes with possibility. When asked, men say their top turn-on (after various favourite body parts) is a woman turned on. The only experience that counts is the one you're having in each moment. The past has passed.

Where did the passion go?

I'm 18 months into my third relationship. The passion fizzled out of the first two and I'm scared it will happen again. We used to have sex twice a day, and sext; now we feel like an old married couple. The lusty bubble of the early days lifts us above the boring rituals of life. We're so excited we can't eat, sleep or concentrate on anything else. Some call it 'the honeymoon period'; I think 'the insane phase' is more accurate. Some people get addicted to the intensity, often mistaking it for love so that when it fades (as it will), all they see are dying embers. A roaring blaze is dazzling but you can't warm your hands on it. Only after flames die down can we get close enough to really feel the heat.

He wants his porn fantasy

I confronted my boyfriend about the porn in his browser history. He says he loves me but has a fantasy about 'slutty' girls, and if I dressed up and acted like them, he wouldn't need it so much. Could it help? No. His porn habit has nothing to do with you, and it's very insulting to insinuate it does. The chances of him finding a woman who 'loves it just the way he wants it', without regard to her pleasure or comfort, are ZERO! He's asking you to disconnect from yourself so he can have virtual sex with your actual body. Maybe if he's not man enough for a real woman, he should sleep with his laptop.



Sex toys are so naff!

The words, 'Let's spice it up a bit' make me shudder. Cue fluffy handcuffs, lacy blindfolds, chocolate body paint and silly role play. Men want hot, sweaty, dirty sex, not the kind that comes in four shades of pink with a vibrating option! Your objection is noted, but you're missing the point – and a trick. Yes, women enjoy sex-toy shopping, and yes, some are drawn to a rosy-hued aesthetic, but don't let that distract you from the message – and there definitely is one. See those fluffy cuffs? She wants to be dominated but not injured. Choccy paint? She needs a more sensual experience. Blindfolds: 'I trust you. Do... whatever.' Oh, and don't let your eyes fool you – all that vibrates is GOLD, no matter how pink it seems.



CONTACT RACHEL

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"Let's be daring and do it at the foot of the bed"

MORE vanilla sex PLEASE!



Forget Fifty Shades, it's time to ditch the debauchery and keep sex simple, says Laura Millar

Hello, my name is Laura, and I like vanilla sex. There, I've said it. I also like vanilla ice cream, vanilla-frosted cupcakes and vanilla-scented candles. Coincidence? I think not. And the more I'm bombarded by the current trend for bondage, the more I'm thankful that my tastes lie less in S&M, and more in M&S (the comfy sleepwear section, to be specific).

These days, everywhere you turn it looks like people are being tied up, spanked, handcuffed and whipped. Sometimes all at once. It's all 'Fifty Shades' this, 'Marquis de Sade' that, and it's generally expected that you should be spending your spare time learning

how to use a sex swing, perfecting your square knots and getting trussed up in lingerie so saucy you could serve it on spaghetti. But every time I hear about this kind of thing, I just feel really, really tired. And a bit icky. What's not to like about a good, old-fashioned bit of missionary, preferably conducted on a nice, comfy bed?

Vanilla sex is often seen as boring or unadventurous, and anyone who's having it is supposedly duller than Gwyneth Paltrow's food shop. Rihanna didn't sing, 'Clean sheets and a nice duvet cover excite me,' after all. But for some of us, having sex without any of the bells and whistles (and for all I know, some people *literally* have sex using bells and whistles), can be just as fulfilling, and just as much fun.

My repertoire takes in ALL the positions (on top, on my back, on my

front), and if I *really* want to give my boyfriend an extra thrill, I make sure I'm wearing matching underwear (though this doesn't happen very often; I mean, who has the time?).

Don't get me wrong, I've dabbled in the dark side. Oh yes. I've used one of those handy airline sleep masks as a makeshift blindfold (it even said 'Virgin' on it – how very Anastasia Steele!). An early experimental incident with that hen-party classic – furry handcuffs – turned into panic when the key fell into a tricky gap down the side of the mattress. And I've even submitted to being spanked by one ex, although I couldn't stop giggling while it was happening. It just stung a bit and left me... well, rosy-cheeked.

For me, it's just not worth the hassle. If I want to feel overpowered, I'll let my man pin my arms behind my head with his hands. That, to me, feels more erotic – knowing he's strong enough to control me without any accessories. And I'm happy to shift the action from the bedroom to, say, the sofa, kitchen counter or up against the occasional wall to keep things interesting.

I just don't feel the need to turn my bedroom into some sort of Batman-style sex cave, littered with high-tech, aggressive-looking pieces of equipment. Let's face it, if a stranger approached you wielding a studded paddle or a leather flogger, your first thought wouldn't be, 'Ohh, fun!' it would be, 'This man plans to steal my bank card.' And while I appreciate that for some people pleasure comes with pain, I'm content with occasional sensual scratches or suggestive bites.

Dressing up is, for me, another no-no. I like to feel comfy and let it all hang out, especially if I've recently eaten a massive pizza. Squeezing into a latex catsuit or frilly French-maid's outfit will just feel uncomfortably tight or scratchy. Ultimately, when it

comes to sex, all you really need is a naked body, a sturdy surface and your imagination. And that's sexier than any butt plug.

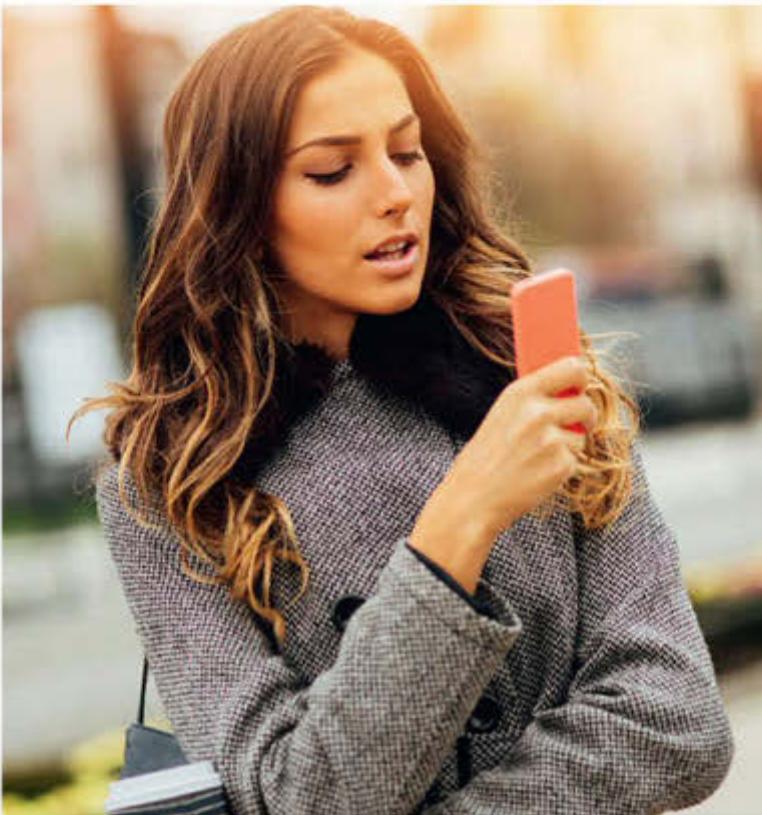
'What's not to like about a good old-fashioned bit of missionary?'

**DO YOU LOVE VANILLA SEX? TELL US AT
COSMO.MAIL@HEARST.CO.UK**



Ask Irma

She's the world's best agony aunt and is here for you when your friends can't be



Should I tell on this guy?

I met a man in a club and we ended up dating for three months, but there was something about him I couldn't trust. I eventually discovered he has a girlfriend of two years and told him to get lost. Should I message his girlfriend? We don't know each other but her Instagram tells me she thinks he's the best ever. I don't want to hurt her. If you tell her, she'll confront him and he'll deny it or say you came on to him. And who do you think she'll believe? However, you'll have planted a seed of truth that could grow into her understanding, or maybe lead him to repent and change. Be certain your motive is concern for her, not another kick at him, and then message her privately. After that, back away. They might split up; they might work things out. It's none of your business. See? Dilemmas really do have horns.

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

The view from my window takes my breath away – it's wider and much brighter than I recall it appearing months ago, before it was hidden from view by scaffolding, now taken down at last. It made me remember dark times end eventually. And things can look better than ever. With sad endings tears are natural. But hold in mind the adventures awaiting you, clear-eyed again.

He can't stop gambling

We've set the date for our wedding and I'm saving towards it. My fiancé is 23 and lives with his parents. He has a gambling problem. He works but never has anything to show for his money. He's always borrowing from me and others, but he won't go to Gamblers Anonymous (GA). One minute he says he'll change, then he says he is who he is, so why should he change? I love him. What should I do?

Unless you want your life to pass in uncertainty and poverty, cancel your wedding plans. Give him an ultimatum: either he joins GA, or he loses you forever. Mean it. Unless you do, it won't work. First, go online to GA and attend a meeting for family and friends of addicts. Then take him by the hand and lead him to a GA meeting. Stand by him while he fights his addiction. But never forget that your own future doesn't depend on the roll of dice. It depends on you.

Does he like me?

The guy I'm seeing is confusing me. We'd both just got out of major relationships when we met. Now he's telling other people we're only seeing each other casually. His friend says he might be back with his ex, who treated him terribly. But he told me he'd never go back and that he adores me. What should I do?

The jagged end of a serious relationship is not a safe place for starting a new one. Disappointment, guilt, heartbreak, shaken self-esteem... they can all cloud the mind after the break-up of a long relationship so the sufferer does not see clearly. In this case, that goes for both of you. Whether or not he's trying again with his ex, he's in a state of confusion. So are you. Please, go out with old friends, make new ones, rediscover who you are and give him time to do the same. Maybe you'll split up.

Or maybe, after a healing time, you will reconnect properly.

CONTACT IRMA

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2 It'll be your maddest holiday EVER Within 24 hours of arriving, we'd stroked kittens in a cat cafe, hung out with harajuku girls, seen old ladies pushing pet meerkats (in nappies!) in prams and done 3am karaoke dressed as an aubergine. Everything from the toilets (more buttons than an Xbox) to the pop stars (girl group AKB48 has 48 members) is OTT. So get involved!



1 Eating out is an adventure Instead of menus, most eateries have plastic models of their dishes in the window – just point at the plate you fancy and hope for the best! Failing that, head to Zauo, a restaurant where your table's a boat and you fish for your dinner. Too much? Try a Japanese Kit Kat – there are over 200 flavours (Purple Sweet Potato, Cucumber or European Cheese, anyone?). It's ALL an experience.

BY SUZY COX, PHOTOGRAPHS ALAMY, GETTY IMAGES



Tokyo: Japan's craziest city

5 reasons to put Tokyo on your bucket list

Up for a mind-blowing adventure? Then head to Japan's coolest city



5 Japan's your oyster After Tokyo has assaulted every one of your senses, get a bullet train to somewhere calmer. Postcard-perfect Kyoto – home to geishas and cherry-blossomed canals – is only two hours away, while foodie capital Osaka (try an octopus ball if you dare) is also great. A seven-day Japan Rail Pass costs £161 online from Japan Experience (Japan-experience.com/japan-rail-pass) and lets you use more than 20,000km of railways throughout the country.



3 Japanese people are SO friendly

When you're in a city where you don't speak the language, can't read any street signs, menus or, well, anything, kind, smiley locals are a godsend. Especially ones who help you navigate the underground, buy a bento box or give you their brolly – just to be nice – when it rains.



Book it
Cosmo stayed at the luxurious Cerulean Tower (doubles from £168, Ceruleantower-hotel.com/en) in bustling Shibuya – the friendly staff and views over the city to Mount Fuji are the ultimate welcome to Japan – before moving to Granbell Shibuya (doubles from £120, book online at Hotels.com or Granbellhotel.jp/en/shibuya), a hip haven perfectly positioned just seconds from all the action.





It's springtime at home



£7

Watercolour Hare Cushion



£35

Wooden Tripod Lamp



£12

Mini Hares Double Duvet Cover

George.com
exclusively at ASDA

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Wesco

Chair and
footstool,
£1,065 for set,
Alexander &
Pearl



Mirror,
£415,
Furniture
Village



Bin,
£159.95,
Wesco



Table,
£123,
Red Candy

BUDGET
Treat your wallet



Lamp,
£17.99,
Dunelm



Bread bin,
£15, Tesco

Chair, £178;
footstool,
£89, both
Milan Direct



Mirror,
£62,
Littlewoods



Table,
£29,
Tesco
Direct

Seeing double

Two retro food mixers – but which one is three times more expensive?



Mixer, £99, Next



Mixer, £299.95, John Lewis



Shelves,
£299,
Next

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Cosmostrology

With Cosmo's psychic astrologer **Jessica Adams**

Aries 20 MAR-19 APR

Starting all over again is exactly what a project needs. A person who does not want to fulfil their responsibilities must be told – or let go. An idea, speech or proposal will receive a wonderful reception from everyone involved. A female friend will move away.

Taurus 20 APR-20 MAY

A man who is distant has work problems, so be sympathetic. Your turn at an impossible task starts to be fun when you realise it's not so serious. Ask around if you are unsure about your tax or bank situation, as someone was there before you. A white lie at home could help.

Gemini 21 MAY-20 JUN

You were promised a project or role that has turned out to be completely different, but you must adjust. A man with an all-male family needs to understand equality and you can help. Seek expert advice to figure out a complex financial, charity, house or flat arrangement.

Cancer 21 JUN-22 JUL

Nobody understands why you need time and space alone but make sure you get it anyway. Wonderful juggling skills on your part make a success of two projects. A man you suspect is gay is undecided. A woman who is a natural activist is too extreme and a word from you will help.



Leo 23 JUL-22 AUG

Trade a favour for something substantial that improves your home life. A man who is nervous with women could hit it off with your girl friend. Find out why a foreign contact is never available, as the answer reveals a lot about your life too. You'll make friends with a people-pleaser.

Virgo 23 AUG-22 SEP

You want to know why you were the last to find out about a situation, but it's not personal. Fabulous money-making or saving opportunities arrive when you look for them online. A trip into the past is sad but healing for you. A summer event needs rapid booking but you'll love it.

Libra 23 SEP-22 OCT

Incredible support for a plan you thought few would like encourages you. The misgivings you had about a secretive male are correct. A bossy female needs to be given a wide berth. If drawn into plans involving an overloaded person and their busy family, make sure you have an exit strategy.

Scorpio 23 OCT-21 NOV

You will spend a lot of your time negotiating this month, so try to be patient. You'll feel set free from a situation that trapped you for far too long – enjoy every moment. Some men are better off being platonic friends with you. A country break or seaside escape is perfectly planned.

Sagittarius 22 NOV-21 DEC

You have no time for people who waste yours, and you need to be firm. You will agree on a major swap or exchange that will change your life for the better. A commitmentphobic woman teaches you about your own emotions. And do snap up an invitation to meet new people.

Capricorn 22 DEC-19 JAN

Your credentials are perfect for the project you are about to be offered, or asked to restart. Make sure others know that and your task will be easier. Foreign or regional UK connections will offer you two choices, so take your time. An unpaid role will be wonderfully rewarding.

Aquarius 20 JAN-18 FEB

Why have so many people deserted a project, group or plan? You need to find out, then make a quick decision. A man who will argue any point is lonely – you can offer support. Girl power astounds you as the sisterhood creates a miracle. And don't buy what you cannot return easily.

Pisces 19 FEB-19 MAR

Pure luck is on your side now and you will receive a wonderful favour, gift or gesture – its ancient karma is tied into your family past. A man who is constantly unwell has other issues. Fantastic freedom to change your lifestyle comes thanks to work or university developments.

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10

THINGS

YOU SECRETLY THINK WHEN YOUR FRIEND GETS MARRIED

'HOW HAS SHE GOT SO MANY CREEPY UNCLES?'

SERIOUSLY, HOW?

'FREE BAAAARR!'

Although you're totally more interested in chatting to the bride's mum than the champagne. Totally.

'My presence is the best present. Right?'

You'd love to have splashed out, but after coughing up for her hen do in Spain and a hotel room with single supplement, they'll have to live with a £10 John Lewis voucher.

"The happy couple"? Full house!"

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'Does this mean I get my mate back?'

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